

Culture, Class, Distinction

**Tony Bennett, Mike Savage,
Elizabeth Silva, Alan Warde,
Modesto Gayo-Cal and
David Wright**



Culture, Economy and the Social

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The book draws on the research conducted for a major ESRC-funded project on *Cultural Capital and Social Exclusion* (CCSE) to offer the first systematic assessment of how far Pierre Bourdieu's (1984) account of the role played by cultural capital in processes of social differentiation can be applied to Britain.

The book examines the cultural dimensions of class on the basis of a survey administered to a national sample. It also engages with the 'cultural turn' that now accounts for so much of the focus of new work in class analysis and of the importance of gender and ethnicity in relation to class processes.

In doing so, it takes account of the wide-ranging perspectives from which Bourdieu's work has been extended and/or critically engaged with, including those of feminist scholarship, American sociological research, debates within cultural studies, the French literature on the sociology of individuals, and work on the relations between ethnicity and cultural capital.

The book is co-authored by Tony Bennett, Mike Savage, Elizabeth Silva, Alan Warde, Modesto Gayo-Cal, David Wright. All are researchers at the ESRC Centre for Research on Socio-Cultural Change (CRESC) – a £3.7 million Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)–funded major international Research Centre analysing socio-cultural change.

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‘Many books are being written about Pierre Bourdieu, turning him into a theoretical “classic”. But Bennett, Savage and their colleagues have written a book to read alongside Bourdieu, using his work as a model and stimulation for continuing empirical inquiry. With rich new data they tackle the question of how specific Bourdieu’s famous analysis of *Distinction* is to France. They show tastes are different in Britain, but that the analytic framework linking tastes to class, cultural capital and habitus is not only transportable but effective and revealing. This is an important book.’

Craig Calhoun *President of the Social Science Research Council*

‘*Culture, Class, Distinction* defines the new research frontier in the sociological understanding of the intersection of culture and inequality. Resolutely empirical in orientation, the authors creatively build on and go beyond the seminal work of Pierre Bourdieu to consider simultaneously symbolic boundaries in the context of racial and ethnic diversity, gendered patterns of cultural preferences, specific fields of cultural practices (reading, music, the visual arts, the body), and much more. Social scientists within and beyond the UK have much to learn from this ambitious and path-breaking collective research.’

Michèle Lamont *Professor of European Studies and Professor of Sociology
African and African-American Studies at Harvard University*

‘A superb achievement: at once a cogent theoretical reappraisal of Bourdieu’s masterwork of 20th century sociology, and a uniquely wide-ranging study, offering powerful insights, into the changing contours of culture in British society today. Like *Distinction*, this book will remain a centrepiece of international sociology.’

Georgine Born *Professor of Sociology, Anthropology and Music,
University of Cambridge*

‘*Culture, Class, Distinction* is the most sophisticated mapping of British cultural practices and preferences ever undertaken. Using cutting-edge techniques of statistical analysis and engaging critically with the sociology of culture developed by Pierre Bourdieu, it explores the cultural dimensions of class, gender and ethnicity across a range of fields. This is a major contribution to understanding the roots of social inclusion and exclusion in British life, and a complex and subtle piece of social theory.’

John Frow *Professor of English at School of Culture & Communication,
University of Melbourne*

‘The amount of labour that has gone into this work is nothing short of impressive. One can only be grateful for the information produced by the authors concerning the relation between social location and cultural practice in Britain today. But the book does a lot more than this. It offers a highly nuanced analysis of this information. It is an excellent example of how one can innovate theoretically while doing empirical research.’

Ghassan Hage *Professor of Anthropology and Social Theory,
University of Melbourne*

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Modesto Gayo-Cal and
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Contents

<i>List of tables</i>	xiii
<i>List of figures</i>	xv
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xvi
<i>Note to the reader</i>	xix
Introduction	1
PART I	
Situating the analysis	7
1 Culture after <i>Distinction</i>	9
1.1 <i>Introduction</i>	9
1.2 <i>Bourdieu's three axioms</i>	11
1.3 <i>Contestations over Bourdieu in French sociology</i>	14
1.4 <i>Bourdieu in the sociology of stratification and education</i>	16
1.5 <i>Bourdieu in cultural sociology</i>	17
1.6 <i>Bourdieu in cultural and media studies</i>	20
1.7 <i>Conclusion</i>	22
2 Researching cultural capital: questions of theory and method	24
2.1 <i>Introduction</i>	24
2.2 <i>Habitus and the dispersal of practices</i>	25
2.3 <i>Disaggregating cultural capital</i>	28
2.4 <i>Field theory and the relational organisation of the social</i>	31
2.5 <i>Methodological overtures</i>	36
2.6 <i>Conclusion</i>	39

PART II

Mapping tastes, practices and individuals 41

3 Mapping British cultural taste and participation 43

- 3.1 *Introduction* 43
- 3.2 *Using multiple correspondence analysis* 45
- 3.3 *The space of lifestyles: a cultural map of Britain in 2003* 48
- 3.4 *Social groups and the space of lifestyles* 52
- 3.5 *The class structure of Britain* 54
- 3.6 *Conclusion* 56

4 Individuals in cultural maps 58

- 4.1 *Introduction* 58
- 4.2 *Individuals in the space of lifestyles* 59
- 4.3 *Snobbery and diversity in accounts of taste* 66
- 4.4 *Conclusion* 71

PART III

Cultural fields and the organisation of cultural capital 73

5 Tensions of the musical field 75

- 5.1 *Introduction* 75
- 5.2 *Music as a contested cultural field* 75
- 5.3 *Contours of musical taste* 78
- 5.4 *The intensities of musical taste* 82
- 5.5 *Music and performance* 89
- 5.6 *Conclusion* 92

6 Popular and rare: exploring the field of reading 94

- 6.1 *Introduction* 94
- 6.2 *The functions of reading* 95
- 6.3 *Book cultures* 97
- 6.4 *Newspapers and magazines: the uses of everyday reading* 106
- 6.5 *Conclusion* 110

7 A sociological canvas of visual art 113

- 7.1 *Introduction* 113
- 7.2 *Contrasting paintings* 115
- 7.3 *Consuming visual art* 123

7.4	<i>Appreciating visual art</i>	126
7.5	<i>Conclusion</i>	130
8	Contrasting dynamics of distinction: the media field	132
8.1	<i>Introduction</i>	132
8.2	<i>The different class registers of television and cinema</i>	135
8.3	<i>Television and new practices of distinction</i>	142
8.4	<i>Film and the differential value of 'aesthetics' and 'the real'</i>	147
8.5	<i>Conclusion</i>	149
9	Cultural capital and the body	152
9.1	<i>Introduction</i>	152
9.2	<i>The concept of embodied cultural capital</i>	153
9.3	<i>Sport and physical exercise</i>	155
9.4	<i>Bodily adornment and care</i>	160
9.5	<i>Eating and cuisine</i>	164
9.6	<i>Conclusion</i>	168
	Resumé of Part III: Tensions and dynamics	170
	PART IV	
	The social dimensions of distinction	175
10	Cultural formations of the middle classes	177
10.1	<i>Introduction</i>	177
10.2	<i>The debate on the middle classes</i>	178
10.3	<i>The British middle classes</i>	179
10.4	<i>Unravelling omnivorousness</i>	182
10.5	<i>Middle-class identification</i>	191
10.6	<i>Conclusion</i>	193
11	Culture and the working class	195
11.1	<i>Introduction</i>	195
11.2	<i>Taking account of culture</i>	196
11.3	<i>The British working class today</i>	198
11.4	<i>Detachment</i>	201
11.5	<i>Local games of distinction: divisions within the working class</i>	205
11.6	<i>Class hostility?</i>	209
11.7	<i>Conclusion</i>	212

12 Gender and cultural capital	214
12.1 <i>Introduction</i>	214
12.2 <i>Gender and household relations</i>	217
12.3 <i>Cultural fields and the gendering of individuals</i>	220
12.4 <i>Contested gender identities</i>	227
12.5 <i>Conclusion</i>	232
13 Nation, ethnicity and globalisation	234
13.1 <i>Introduction</i>	234
13.2 <i>Home and away</i>	238
13.3 <i>The culture-scapes of England, America and Europe</i>	245
13.4 <i>Conclusion</i>	249
14 Conclusion	251
Methodological appendices	260
<i>Appendix 1: Focus groups</i>	260
<i>Appendix 2: The survey and its analysis</i>	262
<i>Appendix 3: Household interviews</i>	275
<i>Appendix 4: Elite interviews</i>	278
 <i>Cast of characters</i>	279
<i>Notes</i>	283
<i>References</i>	289
<i>Index</i>	301

Tables

3.1	Contribution of modalities from each cultural subfield to the variations on each axis, multiple correspondence analysis	47
5.1	Liking/disliking of musical genres	78
5.2	Knowledge of and taste for musical works	79
5.3	Cluster analysis of musical taste	80
6.1	Literary genres, likes and dislikes	99
6.2	Knowledge of and taste for literary works	102
6.3	Preferences for genres of literature, by gender and education, binary logistic regression analysis	105
7.1	Engagement with visual art, selected activities, university graduates and those with no educational qualification	123
7.2	Liking and disliking genres of art	127
7.3	Type of art liked the most and art gallery attendance	128
8.1	Class position and television genre preference	137
8.2	Class position and film genre preference	139
8.3	Film type liked most, by age	143
8.4	Preferences for television programmes, by class, education and age	146
8.5	Film preferences and gender	147
9.1	Favourite sport to participate in, by gender	157
9.2	Selected body modification activities, by gender	161
9.3	Preferred styles of dress, by gender	162
9.4	Alternative and complementary medical treatments, by class	164
10.1	Levels of participation and taste in selected activities, by class	180
10.2	Factors influencing respondents' volume of participation: OLS (ordinary least squares) coefficients of regression	184
10.3	Class identity by occupational group	191
11.1	Taste: liking of selected cultural items, by class	200
11.2	Political opinions, by class	203
11.3	Participation in selected activities, fractions of the working class	207
12.1	Male respondents' social class, by household type row percent	218
12.2	Female respondents' social class, by household type row percent	218

12.3	Occupational class of male respondent and occupational class of partner row percent	219
12.4	Occupational class of female respondent and occupational class of partner row percent	219
13.1	Ethnicity and the regional scales, number of items known and liked	247
13.2	Age and the regional scales, number of items known and liked	248
13.3	Respondents' country of origin and the regional scales (ethnic boost sample only), number of items known and liked	249
13.4	Class and the regional scales	249
A1.1	Focus group participants	262
A2.1	Contributions of active categories	265
A2.2	Contribution to total variance of the seven fields by participation and taste	274
A2.3	Eigen values, rates of variance and cumulated Benzécri's modified rates	274

Figures

(between pp. 124–125)

- 3.1 Multiple correspondence analysis: axes 1 and 2, indicating variables contributing to axis 1
- 3.2 Multiple correspondence analysis: axes 1 and 2, indicating variables contributing to axis 2
- 3.3 Multiple correspondence analysis: axes 1 and 3, indicating variables contributing to axis 3
- 3.4 Multiple correspondence analysis: axes 1 and 4, indicating variables contributing to axis 4
- 3.5 Multiple correspondence analysis: 12 occupational classes, axes 1–2
- 3.6 Deviation and concentration ellipses for age groups in axes 1–2
- 3.7 Dispersion of women and men, axes 1 and 3
- 3.8 Father's highest qualification and respondent's educational experience, axes 1–4
- 3.9 Distribution of three social classes, axes 1 and 2
- 4.1 Position of interviewees (main sample) in the space of lifestyles
- 7.1 *The 'Fighting Temeraire' Tugged to her Last Berth to be Broken Up* (before 1839)
- 7.2 David Hockney, *Paper Pools* (1980)
- 10.1 Middle classes in the cloud of individuals (four occupational classes)
- 10.2 Distribution of professional occupations (mean points) in axes 1–4
- 10.3 Position of interviewees (main sample) in the space of lifestyles, axes 1 and 4
- 12.1 Interviewees (main sample) location in cloud of individuals, axes 1 and 3

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During the gestation of this book, versions of its chapters have been presented in Austria, Australia, Brazil, Hong Kong, the Netherlands, Sweden, Chile, France,

New Zealand, Norway, Finland, Taiwan and the United States, as well as through many presentations in the UK. We do not have the space to list our varied audiences individually but would like to extend collective thanks.

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Note to the reader

In the course of this book we draw on the evidence of close to 200 people who were interviewed or involved in focus groups during the course of our research. We identify the social positions and backgrounds of each of the interviewees when first introducing them. However, for ease of reference, we also provide a brief biographical note for each of the persons who helped us in this way in the ‘Cast of characters’ at the end of the book.

We also describe the methods that have informed our study in general terms at appropriate points in the analysis, and in some detail in our methodological appendices. However, owing to constraints of length, we have not been able to include the actual research instruments used in the study. Readers interested in the questionnaire we used for our survey and in the schedules of discussion items for our focus groups, and for our household and elite interviews, can find these, and all other documents relating to our methods, at the UK Data Archive at the University of Essex (<http://www.data-archive.ac.uk/>). Transcripts of our focus group discussions and household interviews, and the statistical files produced by our survey, are also available at this site.

Many of these sources are also available via a website dedicated specifically to the *Cultural Capital and Social Exclusion* project (<http://www.open.ac.uk/socialsciences/cultural-capital-and-social-exclusion/project-summary.php?>). Many other publications produced by this research are also available at this website. Details of these are also available at the Economic and Social Research Council’s website (<http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk>).

Introduction

For well over 30 years, social and cultural analysts have wondered how far Pierre Bourdieu's classic account, in *Distinction*, of the relationships between cultural tastes and class position in 1960s France might apply to the UK (Bourdieu, 1984). Many questions arose. Does legitimate culture in Britain have the degree of centrality it enjoyed in French social and intellectual life? Do the connections that Bourdieu found between class and culture in 1960s' France pertain here? Does cultural competence confer power in the same way in Britain? Might the intervening development of broadcasting and, latterly, of the Internet have made all kinds of culture so generally accessible as to call into question the existence of any clear separation of distinct class cultures? And as the vocabularies of class have lost much of their purchase in both public and political life, have other types of social division – gender, ethnicity, age – assumed greater significance in relation to differences in cultural tastes and practices?

In the absence of studies probing the social organisation of British tastes in as much detail and depth as Bourdieu's studies of French tastes, answers to such questions have been largely speculative. Our study makes good this deficiency, analysing the social aspects of cultural practice in contemporary Britain as extensively and systematically as possible. This involved a survey distributed to both a national random sample and an ethnic boost sample of Indian, Pakistani and Afro-Caribbean respondents, which was complemented by a national programme of focus groups and household interviews examining how people think and talk about their cultural interests.

Our research was designed partly to replicate Bourdieu's work, but also to extend and qualify it in the light of both subsequent developments in the social sciences and a different historical and political context. Our theoretical and methodological concerns are addressed in Part I. But first, we provide a few preliminary bearings from some of the key contextual differences that we have taken into account. We consider the national specificity of Bourdieu's account of the relationship between class, culture and the education system, and explain how we have qualified this in order to engage with the form that such relationships take in contemporary Britain. The shortcomings of Bourdieu's conceptualisation of gender also proved a compelling challenge. To overcome these, and to take account of the greater diversity of household forms in a period when co-habiting opposite sex couples

2 Introduction

are now a much less secure statistical – and social – norm than was true in the mid-twentieth century, entailed substantial theoretical and methodological revision. The same is true of questions of ethnicity, which, if they are to be placed adequately in the context of the increased international mobility of both peoples and cultures at the start of the twenty-first century, mean that some of the assumptions that informed Bourdieu's approach look increasingly implausible. This is especially true of his conception of society as a nationally bounded entity, with class being approached as a set of relations necessarily internal to the nation. However overused the concept of globalisation might be, the relations between culture and society now take on increasingly trans-national characteristics.

In addition, in Britain, the legacies of Thatcherism and a decade of New Labour have meant that the landscape of class and the ways in which it is – or is not – talked about have changed significantly. Thatcherism was the local manifestation of the longer-term and wider restructuring of capitalism conducted under the banner of neo-liberalism, with profound consequences for both middle- and working-class cultures and ways of life. Increasingly polarised inequalities that have been a feature of British society since the 1990s are broadly shared by Western economies. Yet the language of class has rarely been so muted, particularly in Britain, where, as many commentators have noted (Fairclough, 2000; Steinberg and Johnson, 2004), it has been replaced in the political lexicon of New Labour by neologisms like social exclusion, which have helped to sweep the uncomfortable realities of entrenched inequalities into the placatory discursive registers of the Third Way.

However, the salience of class in contemporary Britain is not sufficiently understood as a set of increasingly polarised economic positions. A positive consequence of approaching questions of class through the theoretical optic of Bourdieu's work is to suggest that culture – understood as a form of capital, as an asset – is central to the constitution of class relationships. Culture is not simply an add-on to class positions whose logic is provided by economic relations represented in the form of an occupational class structure, but it has to be factored into the account of how class positions are constituted and where the lines of division between classes are drawn. Taking culture into account conveys a distinctive picture of where and why class boundaries are most pertinently drawn in contemporary Britain. This diverges from the most resilient empirical traditions of class analysis in Britain over the post-war period, that associated with the work of John Goldthorpe (1980) and the national survey of the class structure undertaken by Gordon Marshall and his co-researchers (Marshall, Rose, Newby *et al.*, 1988).

We are in no doubt, to borrow from Eric Olin Wright (1997), that 'class counts'. From the point of view of culture as a form of capital, we show that class registers cultural divisions. But we are equally certain that class does not always count more than gender or ethnicity. It depends on what the issues are. Distinctive forms of cultural capital are also associated with gender, ethnic and age divisions, which interact with each other and with class-based forms.

This is a key respect in which our findings differ from Bourdieu's. It is the key also to the respects in which, while drawing our main theoretical inspiration

from Bourdieu's work, we have also found it necessary to either qualify or depart from significant aspects of his approach. There are three issues here. The first concerns Bourdieu's conception of the relational organisation of the social: that is, his contention that cultural practices derive their meaning and significance not from their intrinsic qualities but from the ways in which they are related to one another within different fields and the relationships that they have to different social positions within and across those fields. While valuing this perspective, we argue that this relational organisation of the social is much more complex and multi-dimensional in form than the picture painted in *Distinction*, where it takes more-or-less exclusively the form of relations between class positions. We differ here not as a matter of abstract theoretical choice, but on the basis of our findings, which, just as they establish the importance of class, equally leave us in no doubt regarding the significance of age, gender and ethnicity in organising complex patterns of socio-cultural division.

Understanding these patterns, secondly, led us to depart from Bourdieu's use and interpretation of the habitus as a unified set of dispositions rooted in a specific class position. Our evidence suggests, to the contrary, that the habitus – if, indeed, we are to retain the concept – is more typically written across in complex and sometimes contradictory ways, depending on how class, gender, age and ethnicity interact in the processes of person formation.

These two considerations entail a third. In *Distinction*, cultural capital – the advantage derived from the possession of specific kinds of cultural resource – is examined more-or-less exclusively as class differentiation. Our approach, by contrast, disaggregates the concept of cultural capital, breaking it up into several different kinds of cultural assets, revealing the varied ways in which cultural resources are organised and mobilised across different kinds of social relations.

These, then, in rough summary, are the positions we advance. We develop our argument as follows. Part I presents our theoretical and methodological concerns in greater detail. Chapter 1 reviews the legacy of Bourdieu's work, examining its impact on the French, American and British traditions of cultural sociology as well as engagements with cultural studies and feminist academic debates. In Chapter 2, we indicate where we see our work as continuous with Bourdieu's and where we have felt it necessary to distinguish our position from his. We set out our theoretical and methodological premises, and discuss how these informed the design of our research instruments and the interpretation of our findings.

As a consequence of the importance we place on Bourdieu's use of field theory, we follow his example in using multiple correspondence analysis as the main statistical technique to interpret our findings. However, we extend Bourdieu by using this technique not just to see how the ensuing space of lifestyles relates to different social positions (class, age, gender) but also to locate the tastes and practices of specific individuals within that space. Part II reports the results of these analyses. Chapter 3 discusses the social space of lifestyles in contemporary Britain and shows how patterns of cultural participation and taste in the fields

4 Introduction

of reading, music, visual art, film, television and sport exhibit common features in their connection to class, education, gender, age and ethnicity. Chapter 4 looks at the ways in which different individuals are positioned in this space of lifestyles, drawing on qualitative evidence to add to the statistical picture a sense of the different intensities of engagement associated with particular tastes and preferences.

Part III examines more closely each of the different cultural fields previously viewed more globally in Chapter 3. Our aim is to identify the specific logics informing the organisation of cultural tastes, different kinds of cultural knowledge and the patterns of cultural participation in different fields. We also explore patterns of cultural taste and practice that operate across different fields. As well as looking more closely at our survey data, we draw extensively on the qualitative evidence from our focus groups and household interviews, seeing where these complement the survey data and where they suggest the need for more complex and nuanced forms of analysis. We begin, in Chapter 5, with the musical field and, in Chapters 6, 7 and 8, proceed through the fields of reading practices, the visual arts, and film and television. Chapter 9 looks at attitudes toward and involvement in a range of sports and bodily practices. These fields differ significantly in the degree to which cultural tastes, knowledge and participation are divided within them, with the music and visual art fields being the most sharply divided. Class, although by no means inconsequential, proves to be comparatively muted in its effects in relation to sport, film and television where gender and age prove to be particularly consequential. Similarities and differences across fields are identified and summarised in a review section, *Cultural Fields: Tensions and Dynamics*, which brings Part III to a close.

In Part IV we alter the analytical focus to look in depth at the ways in which class, gender and ethnicity are associated with cultural practices. We also look at how these interact with one another. We begin by looking at the cultural practices of the middle class, paying particular attention to their capacity to range widely across varied types of culture, which, more than a commitment to a specific class aesthetic, distinguishes the middle classes from the intermediate and working classes. Our examination of the working class focuses on the extent to which changes in Britain over the past 50 years have tended to erode the existence of a distinctive working-class culture as well as reducing any sense of cultural deference or inferiority on the part of the working classes. In Chapter 12 we look at the role of gender, particularly in connection with the relative importance of women and men in the cross-generational transmission of cultural capital, and the relations between culture and gender identity. Chapter 13 considers the relations between the different white groups in the main sample and the Indian, Pakistani and Afro-Caribbean members of our ethnic boost sample and focus groups, examining how these groups relate to English, American and European cultural forms. The analysis advocates moving beyond the framework of purely national frames of reference to understand how social relations of distinction are formed and operate once national boundaries are extensively traversed by international movements of both people and cultural forms.

The Conclusion draws together our findings by reviewing what our analyses have told us about the social organisation of cultural practices in contemporary Britain: first, in different fields and, second, in their articulation within and across relations of class, age, gender and ethnicity. We then identify the varied respects in which culture functions as a form of capital – as an asset – in the context of these relationships.

Part I

Situating the analysis

1 Culture after *Distinction*

1.1 Introduction

In the early 1960s, a French anthropologist, Pierre Bourdieu, gained a reputation as one of the most important social scientists emerging in the wake of the structuralist turn associated with Roland Barthes and Claude Lévi-Strauss. He made his name with studies on decolonising Algerian society (Bourdieu, 1962), including an influential account of how one could read gender relations from the layout of the Kabyle house (Bourdieu, 1992). He then became one of the first anthropologists to turn attention to his own society, where he became interested in the way that its prized cultural practices sustained forms of privilege. From the mid-1960s he focused on what he called ‘cultural capital’, the ability of privileged groups to define their culture as superior to that of lower classes (Robbins, 2005). Studies of photography (1965) and art galleries (1966) followed. He also conducted a survey and interviews, which probed French people’s cultural tastes, participation and everyday life. The research took a long time to write up, and was put on hold whilst he wrote his theoretical treatise *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (1977). Working with a large interdisciplinary team, he initially produced a famous article, ‘L’anatomie de gout’ (The anatomy of taste), for the new journal he had launched, *Actes de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales*. Then, in 1979, a long, meandering, 600-page book, *Distinction*, was published and translated into English in 1984. This book can fairly claim to be the single most important monograph of post-war sociology published anywhere in the world.

The reader who casually picks up *Distinction* today may be surprised that it has been so important. In a decade, the 1960s, which saw a remarkable increase of cultural and social mobilisation around issues of gender, ethnicity and youth – interests which have only gathered pace in later years – Bourdieu had little to say regarding these issues. He even appeared dismissive of them. Long sprawling tracts of prose uncertainly combine philosophical reflection, historical observation and comments on long-forgotten aspects of French culture in the 1960s. Who now remembers the songs of Petula Clark, or the Visconti film *Rocco and his Brothers*, which was all the rage with Parisian secondary school teachers in 1968? How many people have heard of *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, which Bourdieu claimed was the hallmark of intellectual taste? And what of the famous diagrams that plot an

astonishing range of cultural practices and whose labels – in the English edition – are nearly impossible to decipher?¹ Or what of his notorious tendency to distinguish the social trajectories of different class fractions on the basis of the slimmest of percentage differences in their cultural practices? It is unusual for a book with this kind of dated empirical ‘clutter’ to retain its importance over succeeding decades: the only other sociological works to rival the impact of *Distinction* in indices such as the Social Science Citation Index are either purely theoretical treatises (those of Anthony Giddens, for instance) or present their empirical material in highly stylised narrative form (Michel Foucault).

Nevertheless, the appeal of Bourdieu’s book is readily apparent. In a period when interests in culture, the media and leisure consumption began to expand dramatically, and when extravagant claims were being made about the declining importance of class in these areas, Bourdieu offered the most comprehensive sociological riposte. At the heart of his analysis is a critique of transcendental claims for culture. Rather than treat the worlds of art, music, or literature as ‘outside’ history, Bourdieu regarded them as social agents. Claims about the quality of cultural forms, their greatness, universality, or timelessness were not to be taken at face value, but to be analysed to show how they are bound up with demands for social entitlement by those who prize them. With this move, Bourdieu rewrote the stakes of cultural analysis both inside and outside academic life. Within academic circles, it upset traditional conceptions, which demarcated the ‘humanities’, with their disinterested concern for ‘enlightenment’, ‘civilisation’ and ‘culture’ from the sciences, with their instrumental and practical orientation. He thereby challenged the ‘gentlemen’s agreement’ by which social scientists deferred to the humanities on questions of ultimate value, whilst cultural critics largely left them alone to pursue scientific endeavours. Outside the academy, Bourdieu’s claim that culture is not an ‘innocent’ and private leisure activity has been of great importance in emphasising the political dimensions of culture.

Forty years after his fieldwork was conducted, and thirty years after the work began to appear in French, our book comprises a detailed and elaborate engagement with Bourdieu’s work. Like his, it is based on extensive fieldwork, in our case conducted in the United Kingdom (UK) between 2003 and 2005, and it seeks to make general arguments about the contemporary relationship between cultural and social practices.² We show how Bourdieu’s general approach still offers a powerful and incisive account of the relationship between cultural tastes and activities, and contemporary social inequalities. While Bourdieu himself focused mainly on class, we enrich and elaborate his analysis through greater attention to the intersections of class with gender, age and ethnicity.

This chapter begins with a resumé of three of Bourdieu’s key arguments with which we engage: (a) the importance of cultural capital, (b) the homology between cultural fields, and (c) the role of culture in reproducing advantage. We then turn to consider how these axioms have been taken up within discrete bodies of scholarship, showing how critics have generally narrowed their interests to focus only on specific features of each of these three axioms. In this process, although these critics have made telling criticisms, they have also often obscured

Bourdieu's major achievement, his concern to think in relational terms, by linking cultural capital to an account of the cultural field and the formation of social groups. In the second part of this chapter, we consider Bourdieu's legacy in France. In the third part we show how Bourdieu's arguments have been influential within the Anglo-American sociology of education and stratification, but argue that work in this area has not engaged adequately with his research on cultural practices and tastes. We then examine his influence within (predominantly) American cultural sociology, which has explored cultural capital empirically in unusual depth, but has neglected his concept of field. In the final section, we examine Bourdieu's influence on cultural studies, which has emphasised his importance for theories of cultural change, but has been critical of the aesthetic and epistemological underpinnings of his work.

1.2 Bourdieu's three axioms

We explore the contemporary relevance of what we take to be the three major, inter-related claims in *Distinction*. These are, first, the significance of *cultural capital*. Bourdieu claimed that French society was characterised by a systematic process whereby those schooled in forms of 'legitimate' culture enjoyed advantages over the working and popular classes who stood outside of, or tangential to it. In its most simple form, this is a claim that there is a powerful divide between 'high' (or alternatively, 'elite' or 'establishment') culture and 'popular' culture. While it is not unusual to define culture in such terms (the use of 'highbrow', 'middlebrow' and 'lowbrow' to distinguish different class cultures has been familiar in the United States (US) and UK for much of the twentieth century), Bourdieu brought out their centrality to social relationships. Cultural capital works rather like property: those with it can gain at the expense of those without. As with financial capital, Bourdieu also detected a process of circulation and accumulation. Cultural capital is embodied, and the educated middle classes are physically as well as intellectually socialised into appreciating 'legitimate' culture, that which is institutionalised through being venerated in the educational system and the cultural apparatuses associated with museums and art galleries. Yet, cultural capital is also different from property: since it is embodied, and does not exist independently of people's dispositions and perceptions, its role is systematically and necessarily misunderstood by social combatants. We cannot easily 'stand back' from our cultural frames to allow a dispassionate evaluation of them. Hence, alongside the power of cultural capital to act as a systematic form of inequality, comes the fact that its importance is routinely misunderstood.

Much of Bourdieu's analysis was concerned to unravel the nature of cultural capital as manifested in France during the 1960s. He argued that cultural capital, in its most valorized forms, comprised a distinct 'aesthetic disposition', defined as:

A generalised capacity to neutralize ordinary urgencies and to bracket off practical ends, a durable inclination and aptitude for practice without a practical function (which) can only be constituted within an experience of

the world freed from urgency and through the practise of activities which are an end in themselves, such as scholastic exercises or the contemplation of works of art.

(Bourdieu, 1984: 55)

Yet Bourdieu resisted a simple unitary definition of cultural capital, recognising that it can take on different forms, and more particularly that two rather varying visions compete with each other. On the one hand lies what he called the ‘pure’ aesthetic, characterised by the modernist concern with the dominance of form over function, and a highly abstract orientation:

An art, which, like all Post-Impressionist painting, for example, is the product of an artistic intention which asserts the *absolute primacy of form over function*, of the mode of representation over the object represented, *categorically* demands a purely aesthetic disposition which earlier art demanded only conditionally.

(Bourdieu, 1984: 30)

This leads to an aesthetic of the modernist *avant-garde*, championed by intellectuals and artists, seeking the purity of abstraction. By contrast, wealthy ‘industrialists’ still repudiate routine everyday experience, but through indulgence in the leisurely and luxurious, whereby they ‘incline towards a hedonistic aesthetic of ease and facility, symbolised by boulevard theatre or Impressionist painting’ (Bourdieu, 1984: 176). This is the aesthetic of ‘conspicuous consumption’, of lavish display. Since it is sometimes argued that Bourdieu believed that cultural capital is a form of ‘snob’ culture, it is important to note that he did not use this term and was highly sensitive to variations in the form that a rejection of the exigency of practicality can take.

Our first question, therefore, is to assess whether we can detect cultural capital in contemporary Britain, and if so, to delineate what form it takes.

Bourdieu’s second claim was that of *homology across fields*. Bourdieu argued that each cultural field (literature, visual arts, journalism and so on) has its own autonomy, and can only be understood in terms of the relationships that are internal to it. It is important to know how an artist, for example, situates herself, and is positioned against, other artists. Obtaining a distinctive reputation involves marking out a particular space within a field. This insistence on recognising the autonomy of fields is important given that Bourdieu is sometimes accused of being a class determinist. However, he also took issue with those modernist aesthetes who claim that each artistic world has its own form immanent to itself which is irreducible to any other. He argued that there are homologies across fields, so that similar principles can be detected across different worlds and thereby general principles of classification and distinction unravelled. Fields are generally characterised by a polarisation between those who are positively endowed with honour within them and those who are not, and then, at a secondary level, between

those who are advantaged through taking 'autonomous' positions, and those who import advantages derived from other fields, most importantly those who import 'economic' and political considerations into the field in question (Benson and Neveu, 2005).

These principles were most fully elaborated in later work in which Bourdieu focused on the historical development of different fields of cultural and intellectual production in France and on their contemporary organisation. However, the same principles informed his analysis, in *Distinction*, of the social space of lifestyles. This was made up of the relations between a large number of different fields – ranging across fashion, interior design, sport, culinary pursuits, holiday choices, as well as literature, music, the arts and the media – each of which had its own dynamics and its own distinctive ways of organising and marking differences. Nonetheless, Bourdieu's central analytical wager was that the operation of these varied systems for producing and registering social distinctions interacted with one another to yield homologous sets of distinctions across them. The fact that he was able to show that diverse cultural fields had similar properties, and that they also overlaid each other, so that those who aspired to 'intellectual' positions with respect to (say) music might take up similar positions with respect to (say) the visual arts, sporting preferences and home decor, is central to his argument that advantage and privilege accumulate in the overlaps and homologies between differentiated fields.

Our second question, therefore, is whether different cultural fields, namely in the worlds of music, reading, art, television and film viewing, and sport are structured along similar principles, and if so, what is the nature of the similarities between them?

Bourdieu's third claim was about the importance of *reproduction* and *inheritance*. His celebrated and controversial theory of habitus drew attention to how we come to habituate ourselves to certain routines and thereby reproduce practices. This takes place within our own lives, and also across generations. Whereas in pre-modern societies the inheritance of property is the most important way of passing on advantage, in modern societies a secondary mechanism competes with and even surpasses it. This is the reproduction circuit associated with schooling and formal education. Those parents equipped with cultural capital are able to drill their children in the cultural forms that predispose them to perform well in the educational system through their ability to handle 'abstract' and 'formal' categories. These children are able to turn their cultural capital into credentials, which can then be used to acquire advantaged positions themselves. In this way, a circuit of cultural reproduction, which is also social reproduction, exists. Bourdieu's claim is that even within apparently dynamic, fast-moving cultural fields, one can detect what Walter Benjamin (1973) would see as the reproduction of the 'ever-same'. The same kind of dominant classes are able to remake themselves, and their children, in remarkably persistent ways. However, if this is true for classes, then, as Bourdieu acknowledged in much of his later work, we need to broaden this perspective so as to identify how similar processes

operate in relation to gendered and ethnic social divisions, and to investigate the relations between these and the mechanisms reproducing class divisions.

Our third question is to what extent we can see a process whereby established middle-class groups are advantaged by the organisation of cultural forms, and how similar processes inform the ordering and reproduction of the relations between genders and ethnic groups.

These three claims are each linked to one of Bourdieu's central concepts: capital, field and habitus. The aim of our study is to consider whether these stand up to detailed theoretical, methodological and empirical scrutiny, drawing on the most extensive inquiry into these issues since Bourdieu's own in the 1960s. At the outset, however, we demonstrate that subsequent scholarship has usually focused on one or other of these issues, so failing to do justice to Bourdieu's overall framework. We seek to reconnect studies of cultural tastes and practices to that of social inequalities more generally.

1.3 Contestations over Bourdieu in French sociology

In personal terms, *Distinction* proved the key work in establishing Bourdieu as the most prominent sociologist in France since Durkheim, and in 1981 he was elected to the prestigious chair in sociology at the *Collège de France*. Here Bourdieu sought to mark out himself and his followers (organised as the Centre de Sociologie Européenne) as part of a distinctive sociological *avant-garde*, championing 'craft' methods of sociological work, where inter-disciplinary research teams analysed data on a wide variety of social issues. In a form consistent with his own field analysis, and which drew on his understanding of how Durkheim established his influence within French sociology in the early twentieth century (Robbins, 2006), Bourdieu sought to occupy a position in French sociological space akin to that of the modernist *avant-garde* within other cultural fields. He sought to defend the autonomy of sociological reasoning against any interference from outside. In his later work, he thus identifies himself with a range of *avant-garde* writers, such as Faulkner, Woolf, or Joyce (Robbins, 2006: 2, and more generally Fowler, 2006). He took a 'hard-line' position in opposition to more traditional and orthodox forms of French sociology, which were more closely allied to the other social sciences, notably political science and economics. He showed little interest in the 'cultural turn', which was proving highly influential in English language scholarship, and increasingly distanced himself from Foucault, with whom he had been personally allied until the early 1980s through a shared consciousness of each other as part of a 'new generation'. This was part of his concern to differentiate the position of the social sciences within the intellectual field from that of philosophy (Callewaert, 2006).

This iconoclastic approach has had long-term consequences in isolating Bourdieu and his followers from subsequent generations of French sociologists, increasingly defining him as part of an aloof 'establishment' against which those

outside his research group railed. The Centre de Sociologie Européenne certainly generated an active research culture amongst its adherents, but these focused largely on their own concerns and did not engage with opposing viewpoints. From the 1970s he became involved in a series of rifts with other influential French sociologists with whom he had at one time been allied, notably Jean-Luc Passeron, Luc Boltanski and Laurent Thévenot, all of whom (along with Bourdieu's long-term rival, Alain Touraine) elaborated a more fluid account of cultural values, which related them to forms of social mobilisation and political action. Boltanski and Thévenot's (2006) account of competing economies of worth constitutes a challenge to the emphasis Bourdieu's sociology places on the distribution of honour at the price of other estimations of worth.

Bernard Lahire (2004) used empirical survey material to dispute Bourdieu's interpretation of the unitary nature of the habitus, showing that most people have 'dissonant' cultural tastes straddling the cultural boundaries that Bourdieu emphasised. Lahire's broader project of a 'sociology of individuals' also raised awkward questions regarding the principles informing both Bourdieu's interpretation of statistical data and the manner in which he relates the interpretation of qualitative interview data to statistical data. In suggesting the need to take fuller account of the significance of intra-individual variations of taste, and particularly of their 'impurity', Lahire challenged social determinisms and emphasised the need to recognise more heterogeneous forms of both individual and collective personhood.

A good example of the controversies generated by Bourdieu's later work is his controversial study of 'masculine domination', which he presented as a prime example of the paradoxical submission that is entailed in symbolic violence (Bourdieu, 1990, 2001a). Building on his study of the Kabyle house in the early 1960s (Bourdieu, 1992), the androcentric principle became the paradigm from which he sought to explore the relations between women and men. By applying this trans-historical, invariant principle, to contemporary France, US or the UK, he centred a Western gender habitus on the 'normalcy' of a resilient traditional pattern of masculine domination and feminine submission from which legitimate dispositions are produced (Silva, 2005). Although Bourdieu recognised changes like the increasing participation of women in the labour market, his resistance to incorporating in his framework this and other recent transformations destabilising the gender order is evident in his very sparse use of the burgeoning academic feminist literature of the 1970s and 1980s, particularly in his native France (for critiques, see Trat, 1998; Thebaud, 1999; and Fougeyrollas-Schwebel, 2002). In Bourdieu's framework, women are excluded (by being absent) from many fields (e.g. the political field), while it is notable that the concept of field is not discussed in his treatise on masculine domination. Lois McNay (2000) remarks on Bourdieu's dismissal of the ambiguities and dissonances that exist in the ways women and men occupy gendered positions, and his failure to recognise conflictual subject positions or multiple subjectivities.

Bourdieu's position was further challenged by proponents of the new perspectives of science studies and technology, notably Michel Callon and

Bruno Latour, whose actor-network-theory disputed the isolation of the social from the natural and technical, and pinpointed what they saw as the narrowness of Bourdieu's sociology in an increasingly hybrid environment (Latour, 2004a, 2005). Partly as a response to these criticisms, and partly in response to the advance of neo-liberal politics in France which questioned the role of the public sector, the focus of Bourdieu's work changed significantly. His interests in habitus and cultural capital became less prominent, and he preferred instead to focus on his concept of field. Here he elaborated an approach to field dynamics that sought to defend the autonomy of cultural and intellectual fields from external, namely market, forces, so further allying himself with *avant-garde* elements and distancing himself from those players, associated with the financial sector for instance, who sought to introduce market principles. Bourdieu's account of fields became his response to those accusing him of cultural relativism, as he ultimately defended those who represented the autonomous pole of any field as representing the best and most valid positions (Bennett, 2005). The last book published while he was alive (Bourdieu, 2001b), which sought to argue that an enlightenment view of science as a universal and disinterested practice could be sustained by showing how the organisation of the scientific field produced a group with a vested interest in the disinterested pursuit of truth, showed how far he neglected the messy hybridity of the relations between the technical, social and cultural. After *Distinction*, Bourdieu did not return to explore the interplay between cultural practices, social inequalities and the organisation of fields, in large part as he had to adapt a more defensive position against his various critics. It is this which makes our own study pressing and, we hope, important.

1.4 Bourdieu in the sociology of stratification and education

The earliest reception of Bourdieu's work within Anglophone studies came within the sociology of education and stratification, where his work played out somewhat differently to the French case. Especially in the UK, concerns about education and inequality were inextricably linked to debates about educational reform, and in particular whether selective schools should be replaced by comprehensive schools. Bourdieu's analysis, depending as it did on the unquestioned supremacy of the selective *Grandes Écoles* and the overtly elitist nature of French higher education, was seen by British social democratic reformers as inappropriate in the British context. A. H. Halsey *et al.* (1980) showed that in the post-war selective system, where all children were tested at age 11, with a small minority going to educationally advantaged grammar schools and the rest to secondary-modern schools, middle-class children were systematically advantaged. However, as a committed supporter of educational reform and the comprehensive system, Halsey insisted that there were no intrinsic reasons why the working-class children who predominantly went to secondary-modern schools could not follow more academic routes – given the opportunity. Like many other reforming educational sociologists, he was therefore hostile to Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital, imputing to it deterministic overtones, which he thought could justify selective education

(because it could be argued that since most working-class children would have less cultural capital, it would therefore be entirely fitting to send them to less academic schools). This argument was similar to that developed by American stratification sociologists Peter Blau and Otis Dudley Duncan (1967) and James Coleman (1981) who saw the education system as a device for allowing social mobility from disadvantaged origins. This was a very different take on the role of education from that which Bourdieu championed.

Many sociologists (e.g. Goldthorpe, 2007) have used evidence regarding the extent of upward mobility through education to criticise Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital. However, a significant minority of educational sociologists have shown how the concept of cultural capital can illuminate how middle-class groups sustain their children's advantages within the educational system. More recent educational sociologists, such as Annette Lareau (2000), Stephen Ball (2003), and Diane Reay (2001) have shown the increasing importance of parental involvement in neo-liberal, marketised education systems, through their role in choosing schools for their children and supporting and assisting them through their school careers. Many educational sociologists therefore detect an increasing interaction between home and school, with the result that parental cultural capital is actually becoming an increasingly effective and important tool in shaping educational attainment. Stephen Ball (2003) and Diane Reay (1998) have demonstrated how middle-class 'choice' configures the school environment, and Tim Butler and Garry Robson (2003) have demonstrated how the zoning of schools is shaped by the social constituents of their catchment area.

There has also been a significant body of research on those groups who do not generally succeed in the educational system. Beverley Skeggs's (1997) study of young, white, working-class women in the Midlands, and Simon Charlesworth's (2000) study of young people in Rotherham show that these groups feel disempowered by the workings of the educational system and internalise a sense of marginalisation as a result. Skeggs, like several other feminist writers, also brings out the gendered significance of cultural capital (McNay, 2000; Adkins and Skeggs, 2005; Silva, 2005).

All these new bodies of work suggest that neo-liberal market measures might actually enhance the significance of certain forms of cultural capital. However, what is not clear from these accounts is the form that cultural capital takes. This is an issue we take up further in later chapters.

1.5 Bourdieu in cultural sociology

Whereas in France Bourdieu stood opposed to the cultural turn, and came to represent an orthodox, established sociological position, closely reliant on survey analysis and ethnographic fieldwork, in the US he came to be lionised by a small group of sociologists interested in developing a distinctive form of 'cultural sociology'. The key figures in this grouping, which included Michèle Lamont, Paul DiMaggio, Jeffrey Alexander, Richard Peterson and Craig Calhoun, varied somewhat in their assessments of Bourdieu's work (Calhoun being the

most supportive, Alexander the most critical), but they all agreed that Bourdieu provided a platform from which to launch a distinctive cultural sociology. The reason was that Bourdieu's commitment to empirical research allowed cultural sociology to be defined as a substantive area of 'serious' sociological analysis, comparable with more established research in the sociology of work and employment, family, or community. A particular interest was therefore shown in the concept of cultural capital, which became the core area of interest for this group of scholars.

These researchers sought to distance themselves from what they saw as the reductionist and determinist overtones of Bourdieu's account of cultural capital through three significant interventions. First, and most important, was Michèle Lamont's *Money, Morals and Manners* (1992), which reported interviews with middle-class respondents in Paris, Clermont-Ferrand, New York and Minnesota. Lamont investigated whether snobbish and elitist cultural capital could be detected in both the US and France. She argued that middle-class respondents drew cultural boundaries on three separate axes, which need not be aligned: one of these was around cultural hierarchy, another around moral virtue, and a third was around socio-economic boundaries. Lamont argued that in the US, cultural divisions were indeed marked, but much less important than socio-economic ones. Being wealthy carried its own intrinsic rewards and did not need to be justified in cultural terms. Lamont thus opened up the possibility of developing Bourdieu's analysis comparatively, recognising that specific features of his analysis may apply primarily in France but less so elsewhere. David Halle (1993) also provided valuable insight into the complexity of cultural division. In a detailed study of Americans' domestic art collections, he showed that, although abstract art appealed to the educated middle classes, this was only a minority taste. Some cultural appreciations, such as those for landscapes, were popular across the board, thus enjoining a focus on the possibility of 'middle brow' cultural forms appealing to diffuse social groups rather than, as Bourdieu favoured, assigning tastes to clearly differentiated class habitus.

Of course, Lamont relied on the narrative accounts of respondents, rather than direct observations about their practices, her data eliciting complex, post-hoc rationalisations of claims to distinction. It is one thing to show that people explicitly deny that they are acting out of a concern to preserve cultural hierarchy, but quite another to demonstrate that in practice they do not do this. Richard Peterson's intervention was therefore important in supplementing her arguments about the role of cultural hierarchy by using survey data on American cultural tastes. Specialising in music and a student of the radical Alvin Gouldner, Peterson launched a research programme on 'the patterning of culture' in the early 1980s. In the early 1990s, with various collaborators, he presented his famous argument concerning the rise of the 'cultural omnivore' (Peterson, 1992; Peterson and Simkus, 1992; Peterson and Kern, 1996). Rather than espouse elite, or snob taste, Peterson argued that the middle classes were becoming 'cultural omnivores', who grazed and ranged across cultural forms, incorporating elements from both high and popular culture. The nature of the 'cultural omnivore' has become one of the major research questions of

cultural sociology, in part because it readily lends itself to survey-based measures. One consequence of this has been a realignment of cultural capital debates with orthodox statistical methods.

What Peterson found in the US has been replicated in other countries: on average, the educated middle classes exhibit a greater diversity of tastes and practices than other groups, and their tastes span the boundary between high and popular culture. Quite what that *means* is less clear, and this issue will be a major focus of our book. Does it signify the implosion and dissolution of cultural capital, as the convertible currency associated with the command of legitimate culture is devalued? If so, it might herald an era of much greater cultural tolerance (cf. Bryson, 1996). Or perhaps it is a new form of cultural capital. Erickson (1996) suggested that diverse tastes would serve those in managerial positions well by helping them to communicate more widely and effectively in the workplace. Alternatively, it has been suggested by Warde, Martens and Olsen (1999) and Van Eijck and Bargeman (2004) among others, that omnivorousness might be an orientation which itself acts as a marker of distinction, with eclecticism the new 'cool' (Bellavance, Myrtille and Ratte, 2004; Bellavance, 2008). Or maybe it is not so special at all. Lahire suggests that it may be a statistical artefact of most individuals having dissonant tastes which mix legitimate and less legitimate forms of culture together (Lahire, 2004). Interpretation has proved difficult, if not impossible, on the basis solely of survey data, yet it is only recently that the topic has been studied using qualitative evidence (see Bennett *et al.*, 2001; Carrabine and Longhurst, 1999; Bellavance, Myrtille and Ratte, 2004; Fridman and Ollivier, 2004; Warde, Wright and Gayo-Cal, 2007; and Ollivier, 2008) while Lahire (2004: 255–259) combines qualitative and quantitative data in a manner that is expressly critical of Peterson. This new work suggests that, although there is a very general openness to diversity among most of the population, this does not take the form of a singular and unified orientation that can be expressed in the form of a simple division between those whose tastes are more or less omnivorous. The component cultural elements of different kinds of mixed tastes differ between people, as does the degree of attachment to legitimate culture. Nevertheless, the middle classes do disproportionately both subscribe to and practise apparently similar omnivorous dispositions towards cultural products. Our book engages with these debates to develop a more sophisticated understanding of the nature of cultural omnivorousness.

The American tradition of cultural sociology has also incubated approaches to the organisation of cultural capital that are sensitive to its relation to racialised social divisions. This has been a significant aspect of the work of both Paul DiMaggio (DiMaggio and Ostrower, 1992) and Lamont (2000), as well as of Bethany Bryson and Bonnie Erikson (1996). However, research focused on the relations between ethnicity and cultural capital is not restricted to American cultural sociology, for the topic has emerged as a significant area of empirical engagement on the part of a number of European cultural sociologists working in the Bourdieusian tradition. It has also attracted a good deal of theoretical attention, perhaps most innovatively from Ghassan Hage, whose account of the advantages

that 'host' populations gain from their familiarity with nationally valorised forms of cultural capital compared to migrants seeks to make Bourdieu's categories more responsive to the relations between national cultural fields and trans-national movements of culture and populations (Hage, 1998).

Researchers within cultural sociology, then, have provided a series of powerful critiques of simple distinctions between high and low culture, and have demonstrated both the complexity of cultural practices, and their ability to straddle as well as to differentiate groups. However, although engaging empirically with Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital, these studies have not systematically taken up his field analysis, and have hence not explored the complex relationships between cultural tastes and practices. As a corrective to this, we do not address the nature of cultural capital until after we have explored similarities and tensions within and across diverse cultural fields. We then show how this approach allows us to place our understanding of cultural omnivorousness in a different register.

1.6 Bourdieu in cultural and media studies

Bourdieu's relationship with cultural studies is somewhat complex but, for the main part, works like a one-way street.³ While he was receptive to the work of Richard Hoggart and Raymond Williams, arranging for their translation into French, and, for a while, had productive relationships with the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham, he lost interest in the directions taken by British cultural studies when they fell under the influence of the cultural turn, which he saw as a form of postmodernism that subordinated the social sciences to philosophy (Neveu, 2005).

Compared to the cultural sociologists, cultural studies showed greater interest in Bourdieu's theoretical and epistemological framing of questions of culture, value and hierarchy (Frow, 1995). This, in part, reflected the availability within cultural studies of different ways of both conceptualising and operationalising the relations between culture and power. For Bourdieu the culture/power nexus consisted chiefly in a conception of culture as a possession – an asset that some social agents have at the expense of others – that is mobilised to competitive advantage in a series of power-games played in different fields whose relations are structured by the dominance of the economic and political fields over the cultural field. In this conception (evident in Bourdieu's account of artists and intellectuals as champions of the collective universal and in his various *contre-feux* against neo-liberalism), intellectuals are envisaged as the sources of a contending form of power that must aim to prevail against economic and political forces (Bourdieu and Haacke, 1995; Bourdieu, 1998b).

In general, Foucauldian conceptions have proved more influential within cultural studies in providing an alternative theoretical framework for exploring the relations between culture and power.⁴ Foucault examined how various forms of knowledge are implicated in the organisation and exercise of power, which opened up

approaches to the relations between aesthetics and power that differ significantly from those offered by Bourdieu in the provocative, and now widely criticised (Rancière, 2004; Uzel, 2004), reading of Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Judgement* which governs the analytical architecture of *Distinction*. This has led to different ways of analysing the relations between aesthetics and cultural institutions from those which take their cue from Bourdieu's field analysis, generating multi-dimensional approaches to the ways in which aesthetic discourses are inscribed in relations of power (Bennett, 2007).

This having been said, Bourdieu's interest in systems of classification had a considerable influence on studies of the organisation of cultural hierarchies and their effects (Guillory, 1993; Frow, 1995). His analysis of the contrasting logics of the fields of extended and restricted cultural production (Bourdieu, 1993b) stimulated a good deal of work focused on the organisation of different fields of cultural production and on the operations of particular cultural industries or institutions within these (Born, 1995; Cook, 2000; Gelder, 2004; Grenfell and Hardy, 2007; Hesmondhalgh, 2007). Bourdieu's work also helped to overcome the reticence, evident in a good deal of cultural studies, regarding the value of statistical work, as if this were unavoidably contaminated by positivist or empiricist assumptions (Bennett, Emmison and Frow, 2001; Lewis, 2008).

Bourdieu's insistence on the tensions between high and low culture has proved a valuable resource within cultural studies, even though recent studies (Collins, 2002; Bérubé, 2005) have argued that its force is now considerably muted. It has encouraged the study of more 'popular' forms of culture as a counter to the traditional focus on classical music, drama, poetry and the visual arts. Yet, reflecting the influence of other accounts of popular culture, particularly ones derived from the innovative reading of Antonio Gramsci's work proposed by Stuart Hall (1981, 1986), many cultural studies researchers questioned Bourdieu's insistence on the necessarily subordinate character of popular culture (Fiske, 1992). Bourdieu, in a sense, admitted popular culture to the academic table but, having done so, snubbed it by showing much more interest in traditional elite cultural forms. For while he was no friend of those consecrated forms of cultural consumption through which the bourgeoisie sought to mark its distinction from the working classes, Bourdieu remained committed to the view that those forms of culture that emerge from the struggles of artists and intellectuals to secure a degree of autonomy from both the market and the state had a putatively universal significance that placed them in a different category from works of popular culture (Bennett, 2005).

This explains the ambivalence with which Bourdieu is usually regarded by cultural studies researchers, as a partial ally but one whose influence has also to be checked and countered. Researchers in subcultural studies, while accepting Bourdieu's contention that subordinate cultures are in part shaped by the ways in which they are framed by dominant forms of cultural classification, have been alert to the counter-systems of value formation through which members

of subcultures assert themselves positively against officially validated cultural hierarchies (Thornton, 1995; Gelder, 2007). Related tensions can be found within audience research, where there has been an extensive concern to understand the varying ways in which audiences read and interpret literary, film, televisual and radio texts. An early feature of this work, associated with David Morley (1980) and Janice Radway (1984), was to note how the social characteristics of audiences or readers affected the reception and interpretation of television programmes or literary texts. This was consistent with Bourdieu's insistence on how reception was dependent on an embodied habitus. Radway was also alert to the ways in which audience practices were influenced by the place that particular genres occupy within hierarchically organised systems of cultural classification, although – like many feminist art historians also influenced by Bourdieu (Parker and Pollock, 1981; Parker, 1984) – she brought to this a greater appreciation of the role that gender plays in organising such hierarchies.

More recent research has examined how audiences are able to play with texts by stepping outside the limiting frameworks arising from either their own social position or the constraints arising from the generic location of those texts. Work on fan clubs, studies of the subversive uses of film and music texts within gay and lesbian subcultures, and accounts of the sometimes radically different inter-textual frames within which texts are read, have all suggested a greater fluidity of reading and interpretative contexts than Bourdieu's approach allows (see, for example, Bennett and Woollacott, 1987; Radway, 1988; Penley *et al.*, 1991; Jenkins and Tulloch, 1995; Sconce, 1995; Smith and Wilson, 2004). Media studies researchers have also criticised Bourdieu's field analysis. It was evident, even at the time he was writing, that Bourdieu underestimated the capacity of broadcasting to cut across such fields and complicate the relations between their audiences (Couldry, 2003; Lahire, 2004: 628). There is now also considerable debate about how far new media demand fundamentally new paradigms. For Mark Poster (1995) and Scott Lash (2002), digital media are organised in fundamentally different ways from traditional forms of high culture with their concern to ground deep meanings. Information proliferates and reproduces itself in miniaturised forms, thereby proliferating references. This can be taken either to mark the eradication of high culture, or possibly its transformation, as the ability to handle diverse and complex information of all kinds becomes a more important marker. We will try to assess how far our cultural fields are related to these new technological and institutional forces.

1.7 Conclusion

We have shown in this chapter the remarkably varied ways in which *Distinction* has informed work in contrasting research traditions. We might best describe Bourdieu as, in Bauman's (1987) terms, an 'interpretative' rather than a 'legislative' intellectual: one whose work has inspired dialogue and interaction amongst scholars who would otherwise not engage with each other. It is this wide ambition and scope which we want to reclaim in our study.

We have shown how these diverse bodies of literature have posed difficult questions. These include, first, with respect to cultural capital, whether *Distinction* depends on a 'modernist' conception of 'autonomous' and 'abstract' culture, which now appears dated and inappropriate in commercialised, consumerist, neo-liberal times. Increasing evidence of the pluralisation, diversification and fragmentation of cultural taste make it unclear how traditional notions of 'high culture' are still relevant.

Second, with respect to the homology of fields, we have asked whether technological change, and the dramatic rise of mediated forms of communication and the logic of 'informationalisation' challenge Bourdieu's conception of the field which assumes that cultural practices can be clearly distinguished by being allocated to distinct locations in a geometric space. A particularly important aspect of this point concerns the way in which global flows disrupt national boundaries, and unsettle what Bourdieu takes to be the natural national boundaries that define cultural fields. This is especially true when account is taken of global diasporas and, as a consequence of this, the multiple ethnic differentiations of national populations and of their cultural practices.

Finally, with respect to middle-class advantage, the increasing complexity of household forms and the changing domestic division of labour make it more difficult to take the household itself as the kind of automatic unit of reproduction in the way that Bourdieu assumes, and certainly not one in which the father can be presumed to be the head of the household. These challenges pose deep and difficult questions for the analysis in *Distinction*, and a central feature of this book is its concern to assess the gravity of their criticisms.

Yet, although Bourdieu's work has inspired numerous important exercises of scholarship, many of which are relevant to our concerns, none has the breadth of empirical scope and methodological sophistication to allow a definitive engagement with his arguments. It is dangerous to define cultural capital purely in terms of its role within education, rather than in terms of its relationship to cultural practices and values, or in terms of specific indicators rather than as a complex assemblage evident from the organisation of wider cultural fields. To explore these matters further, in Chapter 2 we develop our understanding of the relational organisation of the social which informs our research methods and modes of analysis.

2 Researching cultural capital

Questions of theory and method

2.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, we identified three questions that guide our inquiries. To recap, these concern, first, the extent to which cultural capital informs the organisation of social divisions in contemporary Britain; second, how far the operations of cultural capital in different parts of the cultural field are governed by similar principles; and, third, how cultural capital operates to the advantage of middle-class groups and to the disadvantage of other groups, taking account of its intersections with class, age, gender and ethnicity.

While the concept of cultural capital thus provides the organising centre for our concerns, we need to disentangle our approach to this concept from aspects of its use and interpretation in Bourdieu's work. This requires that we take account of how Bourdieu's understanding of cultural capital is affected by its relationships to the concepts of field and habitus, and of how it relates to his account of the space of lifestyles. These comprise the first set of questions addressed in this chapter. Consideration of these will provide a theoretical context for our second concern: to identify how our research methods have both been informed by, and depart from, Bourdieu's methodological procedures.

We situate Bourdieu's methods in the context of the debates in which he participated. We cast a broad net, since, far from being narrowly technical, Bourdieu's methodological concerns were defined in close association with his conception of the relational organisation of the social which he elaborated, in opposition to the positivist assumptions that dominated survey research at the time he was working on *Distinction*. Bourdieu's work is of historic significance in developing a relational approach to the analysis of social and cultural practices, which stressed the respects in which their meaning and effects depend on the complex, dynamic and shifting systems of relations of which they form a part rather than on any inherent or intrinsic properties. Equally, though, the particular forms in which Bourdieu expressed his understanding of the relational organisation of the social have been questioned in recent debates, particularly from the perspectives of actor-network-theory, in ways that either challenge or qualify significant aspects of Bourdieu's interpretations of the concepts of field, cultural capital and habitus.

Taking Bourdieu's account of the habitus as a point of entry, we contest his view that habitus are necessarily unified, favouring a more dispersed and plural approach to processes of person formation. This allows the disaggregation of the concept of cultural capital from the singular class logic governing Bourdieu's account of how it is structured by the opposition between the bourgeois aesthetic orientation of disinterestedness and the working-class culture of the necessary. We then broaden out from these concerns to explore Bourdieu's approach to the relational organisation of the social as a positive aspect of Bourdieu's legacy, upon which we build and extend. Rather than broaching this abstractly, we consider it in connection with Bourdieu's use of the statistical techniques of multiple correspondence analysis (MCA) to construct and analyse the social space of lifestyles. Our concern is to identify the challenge this constituted to the theoretical and methodological protocols of positivist sociology, particularly in undermining the assumption that cultural practices can be treated as the manifestation or expression of underlying, independent, or explanatory, variables. We also note some limitations to Bourdieu's position, which derive mainly from his interpretation of the space of lifestyles as the manifestation of an underlying structure that is governed by the relations between class-based habitus.

2.2 Habitus and the dispersal of practices

In the methodological appendix to *Distinction*, Bourdieu tells us that the design of his questionnaire was 'based on the hypothesis of the unity of tastes' (Bourdieu, 1984: 506): that is, the assumption that classes could be distinguished from one another in terms of different unified and internally coherent sets of tastes. This assumption governed how he approached the relationship between his survey data and the other forms of evidence he marshals in *Distinction*: the statistical results of his own survey and of other national surveys of cultural consumption; summaries of interviews with a range of subjects; newspaper and magazine cuttings; and photographic portraits of different lifestyles. Although Bourdieu does not reflect at length on the issues that are involved in placing these different kinds of data side-by-side with one another, his practice is clear enough: he places statistical data, interview material, or photographs together when these reinforce each other to demonstrate the existence of clearly differentiated and internally unified lifestyles that are interpreted as the effects of different class-based habitus. This contrasts with his later work where Bourdieu often characterised the habitus in quite open, loose and flexible terms (see, for example, Bourdieu, 1990a: 77–8; 2004: 160). In *Distinction*, however, Bourdieu insisted on the necessary unity of the habitus, anchoring that unity in the conditions of existence which supply any particular habitus with its determining ground:

Being the product of the conditionings associated with a particular class of conditions of existence, it unites all those who are the product of similar conditions while distinguishing them from all others. And it distinguishes in an essential way, since taste is the basis of all that one has – people and

things – and all that one is for others, whereby one classifies oneself and is classified by others.

(Bourdieu, 1984: 56)

A crucial aspect of Bourdieu's argument is the contention that the generative schemas of the habitus apply across different fields of consumption through a simple mechanism of transference so as to produce a unified set of dispositions. 'The practices of the same agent', he argued, 'and, more generally, the practices of all agents of the same class, owe the stylistic affinity which makes each of them a metaphor of any of the others to the fact that they are the product of transfers of the same schemes of action from one field to another' (Bourdieu, 1984: 173). His account of the homology between positions in the space of lifestyles meant that the principles underlying an individual's or group's tastes in the literary field must also apply to that person's or group's tastes in all other fields. This mechanism, Bourdieu argued, was made manifest in the systematic unity that is to be found across all aspects of an individual's or group's tastes:

It is to be found in all the properties – and property – with which individuals and groups surround themselves, houses, furniture, paintings, books, cars, spirits, cigarettes, perfume, clothes, and in the practices in which they manifest their distinction, sports, games, entertainments, only because it is in the synthetic unity of the habitus, the unifying, generative principle of all practices.

(Bourdieu, 1984: 173)

The possibility of exceptions is largely ruled out through the operation of a mechanism of structural causality through which deviations from the ideal-type of a class habitus are understood as variants of its underlying structure. Exceptions to the rule merely confirm the rule as, Bernard Lahire notes, in the case of Bourdieu's remarks on the phenomenon of 'slumming it', according to which, when intellectuals or artists read popular novels, watch westerns, or read comics, they transform such popular works into props of distinction through distancing or ironic readings governed by the organising principles of the bourgeois aesthetic habitus (Lahire, 2004: 7–10).

This account of the habitus comprises a key hinge in the analytical architecture of *Distinction*. It comes immediately after Bourdieu's account of the organisation of the social space of lifestyles, in which cultural practices are placed close to or distant from one another and are connected to particular classes and disconnected from others, depending on where they are placed along the twin axes (of capital volume, and the ratio of economic to cultural capital) that govern the organisation of that space. This sets the stage, in the chapters that follow, for his discussion of three distinct and internally unified class habitus: the bourgeois sense of distinction, variants of the 'cultural goodwill' of the petit-bourgeoisie, and the working-class choice of the necessary. The operations of the habitus as a 'structured yet structuring structure' accounts for the constellations of cultural practices that are attributed to these classes, cohering them as lifestyles that are rooted in the

determining conditions of each habitus. And it is the relations between these habitus that constitute the structure that subtends, and ultimately accounts for, the organisation of the space of lifestyles to the degree that such class-based habitus provide the mechanism through which the influence of all other factors – age and gender, for example – is processed.

The critical literature has identified many difficulties with this construal of the concept of habitus (Crossley, 2001; Lahire, 2001, 2003, 2004; Bennett, 2007a). Here, we limit our attention to those shortcomings that bear most closely on its implications for the analysis of cultural survey data. The first issue concerns the mechanisms through which particular tastes and dispositions are acquired. There are three aspects to Bourdieu's position on this question in *Distinction*: first, the notion that a person's habitus is shaped by social position and trajectory; second, the respects in which tastes and dispositions are shaped by particular institutionalised trainings (the role of art institutions in training the pure gaze, for example); and, third, in a variant of the argument proposed by Michel Pêcheux (1982), the ways in which they are shaped by the role of social position in determining access to particular kinds of institutionalised trainings and discourses. This last aspect opens up a space in which individuals might acquire heterogeneous tastes and dispositions through their exposure to cultural trainings and discourses that are not necessarily connected to their class position. However, having opened up this possibility, Bourdieu immediately closes it down by insisting that the conditionings a person is subjected to are the axiomatic effect of objective class position as defining a 'set of agents who are placed in homogeneous conditions of existence imposing homogenous conditionings and trainings and producing homogeneous systems of dispositions capable of generating similar practices' (Bourdieu, 1984: 101). This denies the autonomous force of cultural trainings related to gender, ethnicity and religion, and provides little scope for the capacity of trans-national cultural flows to dismantle habitus that are defined in terms of their relations to classes within a purely national conception of the social.

A second difficulty concerns Bourdieu's tendency, discussed at length by Lahire (2004: 160–165), to focus his attention almost exclusively on those aspects of the tastes or patterns of cultural participation that *most distinguish* a particular class from other classes at the expense of other tastes or practices its members share with members of those other classes. The consequence is the construction of ideal-typical class figures that focus disproportionately on activities, which, while pin-pointing the tastes that most specifically distinguish the class concerned in relation to other classes and thus most clearly identify (or dramatisé) the relative positioning of classes in social space, are often of quite minor significance in the activities of that class as a whole. To exemplify the point in relation to our own data, while the artistic tastes of the higher level professionals in our main sample are most distinctively differentiated by their high rate of liking for Impressionism (21 per cent naming this as the kind of visual art they most like compared to only 6 per cent of both semi-skilled and unskilled workers), a higher proportion of professionals (41 per cent) prefer landscapes, a taste they share with 44 per cent of the semi-skilled and unskilled workers.

Lahire interprets such patterns as aspects of ‘dissonant taste profiles’, suggesting a divided rather than a unified habitus. Driven by the need to buttress his conception of the necessary unity of the habitus, however, Bourdieu would probably have argued against Lahire by claiming that the modes of appropriation of landscapes to be found among middle-class professionals differ from those of the working class, owing to the varying kinds and degrees of art training, which, by dint of their different class positions, they have acquired. We do not deny the force of this argument, which is, again, one of the precepts Bourdieu develops in his methodological appendix, where he notes the inability of survey findings to capture ‘the modality of practice’, that is, the way in which specific cultural practices are integrated into a distinctive ‘art of living’. However, we do dispute the degree of latitude Bourdieu accorded this consideration. It is essential to assess empirically whether middle-class professionals also take part in and like many forms of cultural activity, in much the same way and for much the same reasons as do the members of other classes from whom, in other respects, their tastes are distinct.

As is also made clear in the argument about the cultural omnivore, introduced in Chapter 1, understanding ‘cross-over’ tastes and practices is a central feature of developing a contemporary account of cultural capital, which focuses not only on the cultural tastes and practices that are most closely associated with particular groups, but also on those practices which straddle and bridge them. This means looking at tastes and practices that diverse groups may share, as well as those that appear to set them apart. It also means using our qualitative data to probe and qualify our survey data, to see whether dissonant and contradictory taste profiles of groups and individuals can be detected.

2.3 Disaggregating cultural capital

These concerns led us to reflect on the concept of cultural capital. Using Kant’s *Critique of Judgement*, Bourdieu laid out the social space of lifestyles as a series of intermediate points between the antinomy defined by the aesthetic orientations of the bourgeoisie and the working classes. The aesthetic orientation of the bourgeoisie, defined by the Kantian aesthetic of disinterestedness, in which taste is governed by the ‘purposiveness without purpose’ that defines the *je ne sais quoi* of pure aesthetic perception, is thus opposed to working-class culture defined by its ‘choice’ of the necessary. This is understood as an ‘anti-aesthetic’, in which taste is reduced to making a virtue out of the exigencies of dull economic compulsion, yielding an uncompromising functionality that is unredeemed by any consideration of aesthetic form for its own sake. It is this opposition that structures the coordinates of the social space of lifestyles in relation to which cultural capital is defined as an asset that accrues to those whose habitus, shaped by an aesthetic of disinterestedness acquired in the middle-class home, is recognised and rewarded by the education system.

This conception of the relations between habitus and cultural capital has been extensively criticised. For Goldthorpe (2007), speaking from a rational choice perspective within British social stratification theory, Bourdieu’s concept of

cultural capital and its anchorage in the habitus as the mechanism through which it is passed on from one generation to the next as an inheritance, conflates matters that are best kept distinct: the analysis of the educational resources that middle-class parents are able to mobilise for their children by choice of school, for example, and the values that they instil in them through the cultural ethos of middle-class home life. Manuel DeLanda (2006: 63–66), speaking from the point of view of assemblage theory associated with Gilles Deleuze and Latour, similarly takes Bourdieu to task for what he characterises as the ‘master mechanism’ of the habitus in securing a necessary unity of the relations between home life, education and occupational destiny. Mindful of these criticisms, we are cautious regarding the explanatory reach of the concept of cultural capital, suggesting that the types of assets that Bourdieu folds into one another in relations of necessary connection in his account of the bourgeois habitus are ones that are best disaggregated in order to better assess the extent of their relative scope and effectivity (Bennett *et al.*, 2005). Rather than assume an essential unity to cultural capital, therefore, we find it more valuable to explore a range of different assets and markers that might be proposed as sources of cultural privilege. This book aims to explore which, if indeed any, of these are most evident in the contemporary British context.

We see it as important to identify and isolate the component elements of cultural capital, and to consider their efficacy in new and different situations. This is particularly so as Bourdieu’s corpus does not leave a definitive or systematic account of the types of capital and their relationship to one another. He repeatedly made distinctions between economic, cultural, social and symbolic capital. And, in one essay, he distinguished three subtypes of cultural capital – institutionalised, embodied and objective – though their exact provenance and content is difficult to pin down (Bourdieu, 1986). Institutionalised cultural capital confers honour deriving primarily from holding educational qualifications, where the credentials bestowed and the institutions awarding them generate differential value for individuals and groups. Objective cultural capital refers to possessions and, by implication, to the judgements of taste associated with their acquisition or participation in related areas. Embodied cultural capital is manifest in demeanour, accent, dress and bodily comportment generally. The profit to be derived from assets like beauty, slimness, or a fitting accent is widely acknowledged, though the techniques for the recognition of, for instance, beauty are much contested.

Later analyses have suggested the need to recognise, in addition, other forms of cultural capital that social groups might be able to mobilise. In one of his last works, Bourdieu introduced the concept of ‘technical capital’ to refer to the distinctive assets that members of the working classes acquire through their vocational skills and pass on to their children through domestic training (Bourdieu, 2005). Although Bourdieu’s formulations relate to working-class men, there is no need for this conception of the relative advantage specific sections of the working class derive from technical competencies acquired in the home or school to be gender restricted in this way. Feminist engagements with Bourdieu have also pointed to the need to take account of the effects of emotional capital as a resource that is developed

within the home, usually primarily by mothers (Reay, 2000; Silva, 2000). This constitutes an asset that is convertible into occupational advantage in, for example, the caring professions and in some areas of management – particularly human resource management.

In addition, subcultural capital refers to those assets that have a limited circulation among members of specific subcultures that might be defined in terms of specific age groups (Thornton, 1995) or as the forms of cultural know-how and familiarity that are specific to particular ethnic communities (Trienekens, 2002). There is also a concept of cultural capital as a distinctively national formation, which, in the terms proposed by Ghassan Hage (1998), operates through the different relations that ethnic groups have to those forms of cultural experience, knowledge and familiarity which confer a sense of national belongingness.

These, then, are among the different forms of asset which may be taken into social worlds and social contexts, and which may be converted into economic opportunities, valued social contacts, or honour and esteem. Unpacking cultural capital requires attention to all. How these different types of capital are to be recognised and their relative value estimated requires attention to additional considerations. The main force of the argument in *Distinction* stressed two markers of hierarchical ordering, the command of legitimate culture and the application of the Kantian aesthetic. Those possessing the greatest amount of cultural capital displayed both. However, the Kantian aesthetic is only one of several orientations which found and convey claims to social honour and esteem via modes of cultural consumption.

Facility with the Kantian aesthetic ethos of disinterestedness gives the ability to appreciate ‘abstract’ cultural forms, distanced from the practical necessity of daily life, and is viewed, by Bourdieu, as a crucial component of cultural capital. It is a particular orientation towards cultural products – or what Bourdieu called a modality of practice. It is most likely to manifest itself in relation to traditional forms of legitimate culture (a liking for classical music and opera, for example) and, perhaps more especially, in modernist and *avant-garde* cultural practices, including their contemporary cosmopolitan formation. However, as Holt (1998) most forcefully insisted, the orientation, the mode of appropriation of the product, cannot be deduced from its substantive content.

An alternative, partially related, orientation is often referred to as ‘snob’ culture, in which some groups lay claim to social superiority through their access to exclusive cultural practices. Some of the same cultural practices figure here, especially traditional forms of legitimate culture, alongside other practices, elite sports, for example, in a formation where it is not a Kantian disposition that matters but the expense, or other aspects, of the activity which enable it to function as a marker of social exclusiveness.

A third orientation consists in the command of whatever is most highly valued within the education system. This is a matter of being educated rather than cultivated *per se* and finds its expression in displays of practical competence in, for example, scientific and management disciplines as well as cultural ones. It is available to many, but is mobilised, in the main, by the professional and managerial

classes and becomes a key aspect of trans-generational strategies of inheritance through recognition of the value of credentials.

Fourth, and pulling in a somewhat contrary direction to these first three, is cultural omnivorousness, in which cultural capital is displayed less in terms of an attachment to particular types of culture than by its specific and validated capacity, again largely acquired and transmitted through the education system, to appreciate different cultural genres irrespective of their classification as 'high' or 'low'. An openness to diversity and a cultivated agility with respect to judgements of taste are its chief defining features.

By distinguishing these different types of cultural capital and the different orientations that may accompany them, it will be possible to present a more complex and empirically adequate account of the operation of cultural capital in the contemporary world. Of course, we do not suggest that all these forms of cultural capital are equivalent in the degree of advantage or 'profit' they afford those who hold them. They are clearly capitals of different powers and orientations of different degrees of persuasiveness: assets that can be cashed or traded in different markets, some of which have very local and specific effects, while others play more central roles in the operation of labour markets and their relations to the schooling system.

Having clarified how we interpret the concepts of habitus and cultural capital, we now consider the implications of these considerations for our approach to Bourdieu's use of field theory and his understanding of the relational organisation of the social.

2.4 Field theory and the relational organisation of the social

Bourdieu's comments in the methodological appendix to *Distinction* on what he characterised as the 'naively empiricist conception of scientific work' (Bourdieu, 1984: 503) of the dominant tendencies in American sociology at the time, provide some useful guidelines here. Bourdieu worked through his relationship to this tradition largely via Paul Lazarsfeld, taking issue with Lazarsfeld's expectation that the order of presentation should match the actual process of the research, with initial hypotheses, methods, data, analysis and findings laid out in turn in logical sequence (Bourdieu, 1984: 503). Telling us that he had written an earlier draft in keeping with these precepts, Bourdieu finally decided to adopt an order of exposition 'which starts out from the point of arrival of the research' as 'the only sequence which allows each fact to be replaced in the system of relations from which it derives its truth-value' (Bourdieu, 1984: 503). The issues that were at stake here for Bourdieu are made clear in a later reflection on his earlier study, *The Love of Art* (Bourdieu, Darbel and Schnapper, 1990), in which he had relied mainly on orthodox forms of regression analysis and statistical modelling, and had presented his findings in the conventional manner (Bourdieu, 1993: 265–256). He explained that this earlier book was written in response to the pressure exerted by Lazarsfeld's attempts to impose the norms of scientific positivism on European sociology, with the consequence, he remarks wryly, that even Lazarsfeld liked the book!¹ The price Bourdieu paid for this, however, was that he felt his true

scientific purpose in *The Love of Art* had gone unrecognised. His aim, he tells us, was less to conduct an empirical study of museum visitors than to provide the basis for a sociology of artistic perception that would identify the 'pure gaze' of the art connoisseur as the manifestation of a position in the artistic field that could only be understood in terms of its relations to other positions in that field.

Although he clearly contemplated bending the knee once again before the power of positivism, Bourdieu finally desisted. He therefore, in *Distinction*, took the 'aristocracy of culture' – the disinterested aesthetic of high bourgeois forms of consumption – as the starting point for his discussion of the system of oppositions governing the relations between different positions in the field of cultural consumption. This provided his point of entry, in the second chapter, into the 'economy of practices' governing the space of lifestyles in which different forms of cultural consumption find their specific social meaning and value from the positions they occupy in relation to one another. This space of lifestyles was constructed by applying the techniques of MCA to the survey data produced by his questionnaire. These techniques were derived from J.-P. Benzecri's school of geometric data analysis, a mathematical community to which Bourdieu was closely related. They provided a way of translating his theoretical concerns into new means for analysing cultural survey data by plotting the relational distribution of cultural practices in a geometrically defined field.²

Yet, although he was the first sociologist to use this method, Bourdieu drew on a significant tradition of field analysis applied to social research, led during the mid-twentieth century by the psychologist Kurt Lewin, which insisted on the need to place practices relationally, as if they were organised in a force-field such as that characterised by tensions between magnetic poles.³ This 'field analytic' approach, which in the immediate post-war years was popular amongst psychologists, sociologists and anthropologists, went into sharp retreat owing to the rise of the random national sample survey, with its deployment of atomised individuals and their 'attributes' as the centre-piece of social scientific analysis (Martin, 2003). However, whilst in the 1970s and 1980s Bourdieu was swimming against the tide in continuing to champion field analysis, recent developments, notably the potential offered by new forms of transactional data to conduct network analyses on 'whole populations' (Savage and Burrows, 2007), present new opportunities for field analysis. In this respect, Bourdieu was fighting the same battle that American case-centred sociologists, such as Stanley Lieberson (1985) Andrew Abbott (2001) or Charles Ragin and Howard Becker (1992), or actor-network theorists such as Latour (2005), were to fight twenty to thirty years later. Bourdieu's concern, which avoids defining the 'social' in the form of a division between dependent and independent or causal variables, and focuses on the relations between practices arrayed on a plane, has considerable current resonance.⁴ His use of MCA figures to lay out the relationship between different types of cultural practice is inextricably linked to his hostility to the reification of variables and the assumption that they have some kind of autonomous and independent 'causality'.

Distinction did not initiate a 'tradition' of Bourdieu-style cultural surveys.⁵ Social scientists interested in survey analysis directed their activities towards more formal measurements of economic and social indicators, such as social class, income and poverty. Consequently, the survey component of *Distinction* seems out of step with subsequent cultural survey research, which came, instead, to be dominated by the tradition of work pioneered by Richard Peterson, whose 1983 special issue of *American Behavioural Scientist* reported on the organisation of cultural practices using data from the US General Social Survey. Peterson's initial concerns in using descriptive multi-variate methods to unpack the clusterings of American cultural life were rather similar to Bourdieu's. However, his later work on the 'cultural omnivore' (Peterson and Kern, 1996) and the extensive literature on the quantitative analysis of cultural practices that it has generated – much of it focused on the journal *Poetics* – has relied on more standard statistical procedures, which are concerned to identify the effect of 'independent' on 'dependent' variables, particularly by using the methods of regression analysis. These typically construe the task of analysis as one of identifying the most effective causal variable from a range of social factors – occupational class, gender, age, etc. – in relation to specific patterns of cultural activity: film tastes, leisure practices, etc.

Yet the theoretical assumptions underlying these procedures are precisely the ones Bourdieu took issue with for their inability to take adequate account of the relational organisation of the social:

The particular relations between a dependent variable (such as political opinion) and so-called independent variables such as sex, age and religion, or even educational level, income and occupation tend to mask the complete system of relationships which constitutes the true principle of the specific strengths and form of the effects registered in any particular correlation. The most independent of 'independent' variables conceals a whole network of statistical relations which are present, implicitly in its relationship with any given opinion or practice.

(Bourdieu, 1984: 103)

Abbott's (2001) more recent criticisms point in the same direction when suggesting that, in our messy and complex world, it is not possible to easily differentiate 'causal' from 'dependent' variables and then statistically assess the relationship between them (and see also, on the value of descriptive methods, Goldthorpe, 2007: 207ff). Abbott insists on the recursiveness of social life, the arbitrariness of separating out 'before' and 'after', and the problems which are entailed in thereby attributing agency to reified variables deemed to have independent causal properties. For these reasons, in contrast to many subsequent Anglophone engagements with *Distinction*, we returned to Bourdieu's use of MCA – to debate with Bourdieu on his own terms.

The capacity of MCA to map the relationships between cultural tastes and practices and social positions on the same plane, as variables whose interaction can be analysed without the a priori assertion of hierarchical relations of causal

dependency between them, offers a powerful tool for engaging methodologically with the relational organisation of the social. Equally important, the conception of the social that informs Bourdieu's analyses of the space of lifestyles is one that includes culture in its constitution. This is another aspect of the role that the concept of cultural capital plays in Bourdieu's work. For it is through this concept that Bourdieu is able to 'sum up' the classical sociological actors of social classes in new ways. This concept first enters into Bourdieu's theoretical lexicon during his earlier collaboration with Jean-Claude Passeron in a study, first published in 1964, of the relations between the social origins, cultural preferences and academic success of students at the University of Lille (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979). The major innovation of this work, in Derek Robbins's (2005) estimation, consisted in the role it accorded cultural capital as the mechanism of connection through which the impact of differential social origins on different levels and kinds of scholastic performance could be accounted for. This formed part of a re-conceptualisation of those origins as being defined not solely in socio-economic terms. In providing the relay mechanism through which social origins connect with and are translated into differential educational outcomes, cultural capital, by relating class position to particular kinds of cultural and educational training, 'culturalises' the social by making such dispositions part and parcel of class position. The consequences of these considerations are easily, and literally, visible in the famous graphic representations of the space lifestyles that Bourdieu constructed in *Distinction*. For these bring cultural practices and class position together on the same plane in relations of mutual interactivity: playing belote, football and rugby, liking public dances, bacon, bread, pasta and ordinary red wine being connected to the position of skilled workers in this way, for example.

There are, then, real strengths to these aspects of Bourdieu's conception of the social and the statistical procedures he used to grapple with its complexity. Yet, as he himself recognises, problems arise if we reify the MCA figures and assume their mappings are of literal, real, variables. Recent social theory has also insisted on the limitations of thinking of space purely in geometric terms, as MCA requires.⁶ This is a recent thread in actor-network-theory, particularly in the emphasis it places on 'fluids'. Deleuze's work, as interpreted by DeLanda (2002), is another case in point. Deleuze insists that spaces of intensity or affect cannot be read off from the geometry of physical space.⁷ We therefore need to be attentive to the ways that different 'zones' of the space of lifestyles may have different 'energies'. To give an example: it may be that people who occupy closely related positions in the space of lifestyles have intense disagreements (as well as agreements) about precisely the cultural items and genres that they share in common. There is a danger in using MCA diagrams of assuming that items on one side of an axis are in opposition to those on another, and that such tensions are salient to those actors, when in fact they may be much more energised against those who are actually very similar to themselves but who occupy an intense, even 'affectual', cultural zone that is at odds with their position in the space of lifestyles. There is also a danger that separating cultural tastes and practices geometrically can polarise tastes artificially or improperly and, as is certainly the case in *Distinction*, to exaggerate the degree

to which the practices of individuals, and of groups of individuals, are homologous with one another across different fields and opposed to other groups with equally unified sets of tastes.

These difficulties in Bourdieu's account of the spatialisation of social relations are echoed by parallel contradictions characterising the structuralist register of Bourdieu's work. Apart from being indebted to field theory, Bourdieu's conception of the relational organisation of the social drew on structural linguistics and its derivatives – particularly structuralist forms of literary analysis – in which the units of language (or of literary and artistic systems) derive their value from their differential relations to one another rather than from any intrinsic properties. At the same time, however, Bourdieu repeatedly argued that the objectifying procedures of sociology were able to identify underlying structures which ultimately accounted for the disposition of observable phenomena.⁸ Martin reflects on these issues in commenting on the tensions that result from Bourdieu's attempt to marry the positional analysis of field theory with what he characterised as the objective concerns of structural analysis (Martin, 2003: 21). Whereas the former seeks to describe the ways in which social actors place themselves relative to one another within different fields of competitive striving, it is, Bourdieu argued, the objective structure of social space that provides a common substratum connecting these fields, ordering their relations to one another and accounting for the relative positioning of actors to one another within each field. This structure is organised by different allocations of capital and constitutes a set of relations, which, unlike the positions actors take up within different fields, for Bourdieu, is objective in the sense of being independent of the subject's will and intentions. It is these relations that are the ultimate object of Bourdieu's sociological analysis, for they underlie and account for the level of behaviour constituted by the reciprocal acts of subjective position-taking within fields (de Nooy, 2003: 317).

This, to be sure, is not an underlying reality in which reified independent variables account for cultural practices in relations of one-to-one dependency. Rather, as we have seen, it is a reality that takes the form of a set of structured relations between different class-based and essentially unified habitus, described as the underlying 'structuring structures' that account for observable differences in the distribution of cultural practices. We have indicated why we dissent from this conception of the organisation of the social in our earlier discussion of the habitus. As later chapters show, approaching the relational organisation of the social solely in class terms proves singularly unable to accommodate the more multi-dimensional logics connecting cultural practices and social positions that are evident in our empirical findings.

Bourdieu's commitment to a determining structure underlying and accounting for the relations between practices also explains why, in Latour's estimation, Bourdieu's work retained significant aspects of the double-planar forms of analysis favoured by 'sociologists of the social' (Latour, 2004b, 2005). In their commitment to dualistic ontologies which accord primacy to one set of realities relative to others, Latour argues, such sociologists fail to attend to the processes through which different networks of relations are made durable as specific, but different public organisations of things and people interacting on the same level, although

not, of course, necessarily with the same force (Latour, 2004a: 53).⁹ *Distinction*, it seems clear in retrospect, claimed a new jurisdiction for sociology as a ‘science’ that can unravel opaque social patterns and processes. It was written at a time when the social sciences were undergoing remarkable expansion and enjoyed huge popularity. In many nations, during the later 1950s and 1960s, other pioneer sociologists were similarly deploying their expertise over the social as a means of grounding their own critiques of other claims to expertise. This vision for sociology as *the* ‘science of society’, as the one discipline able to subject other disciplines to critique whilst leaving its own foundations secure, is clearly untenable given both the degree to which the stakes over the ‘social’ are so hotly contested and, particularly, the broad recognition that the different versions of the social employed by sociologists are very much the products of the theories and methods they use to fashion their objects of study. For these reasons, then, we write from a more modest assessment of the knowledge produced by traditional forms of sociological fieldwork and statistical analysis and from an explicit recognition that we construct ‘the social’ that is the object of our inquiries in specific ways.

We might summarise our discussion to this point by saying that our primary aim is to negotiate Bourdieu’s key concepts into a looser, more pliable and contingent set of relations to one another than the ones they occupy in *Distinction*. We have thus questioned the theoretical foundations of Bourdieu’s conception of the habitus as unified and, so far as cultural capital is concerned, prefer to see this as a convenient umbrella term for a range of different cultural assets rather than according to the logic of a single capital form that operates in the same way across all class positions. We now turn to consider how we have translated these theoretical principles into the methodological components of our inquiry by indicating where we have built on and developed Bourdieu’s methods, and where we have parted company with them.¹⁰

2.5 Methodological overtures

Considered in historical perspective, *Distinction* was unprecedented in sociological research in using such a wide range of questions on such an extensive battery of cultural items.¹¹ In the mid-1960s, surveys were fast becoming a mainstream tool of social research. In the US, Blau and Duncan’s (1967) study of the American occupational structure was the first to use a national random survey to draw general arguments about the nature of social mobility. In the UK, David Glass’s 1949 survey had pioneered social mobility research, but it was not until the Nuffield Mobility Study of 1970–1972 that comprehensive survey measures were used. All of these studies were groping towards measures of status, class and attainment, primarily in terms of occupation and education. Some of them asked attitude questions, and a few asked about social participation, for instance, membership of voluntary associations or friendship networks. Few, however, had questions on cultural activities, on what films people watched, which pictures they liked, who their favourite musicians were, or asked respondents to choose their favourite from a list of photographs.

Other aspects of *Distinction* have stood the test of time less well from the point of view of subsequent developments in survey methodology. This is certainly true of Bourdieu's design of the survey sample. We learn, again from Bourdieu's methodological appendix, that the survey on which *Distinction* is based was carried out initially in 1963 in Paris, Lille, and a small provincial town on a sample of 692 respondents, a total that was later brought to 1217 by a complementary survey conducted in 1967–1968. The initial survey was preceded by a programme of extended interviews and observations to help generate items of cultural taste and practice for inclusion in the questionnaire. In noting the characteristics of the sample, Bourdieu tells us that this was deliberately biased toward the upper and middle classes so as to allow for a fine-grained analysis of the cultural practices associated with different fractions of these classes. He also tells us that semi-skilled and unskilled labourers were under-represented in the survey design on the grounds that it was already known that these were 'very uniform with regard to the object of the survey, i.e. very uniformly excluded from legitimate culture' (Bourdieu, 1984: 505).

Our survey by contrast, conforms fully to modern sampling techniques (see Appendix 2). It was administered to a national random sample of 1564 respondents, and an ethnic boost sample of 227 respondents recruited more-or-less equally from Britain's three main minority-ethnic groups (Indian, Pakistani and Afro-Caribbean), yielding a total of 1791 respondents. The survey was subcontracted to the National Centre for Social Research, which assisted us with questionnaire design, and administered the survey over the winter and early spring of 2004–2005. During one week of this period we collected a sample of newspapers and magazines to identify how particular kinds and styles of cultural consumption were directed at different readerships. The design of the questionnaire and the administration of the survey were preceded by an extensive programme of focus-group discussions in order to explore both the cultural practices and the modalities of practice of different sections of the population (see Appendix 1). Each focus group was constituted to achieve a different permutation of social positions: occupational class, gender, ethnicity, age and sexuality.

Mindful of Bourdieu's remarks about the inability of survey questionnaires to explore the modality of practices, we followed the survey with an extensive programme of household interviews with members of the survey sample and, where relevant, their partners (see Appendix 3). Since we knew a random sample would yield few, if any, examples of individuals occupying particularly prominent positions in the economic, political, or cultural fields, we followed Bourdieu's lead by using institutional and personal connections to conduct a set of 'elite interviews' with prominent business men and women, politicians, and senior civil servants and academics (see Appendix 4).

Our approach to questionnaire design, while following the general contours of Bourdieu's approach, differed in a number of significant respects. More alert to the significance of gender variations of cultural taste and practice, we included questions expressly designed to explore these matters. Where Bourdieu asked about the occupation and educational qualifications of father and paternal

grandfather, we asked about the occupations and educational qualifications of both mother and father. We also asked about the roles of both parents in relation to a range of child-rearing functions in the household in order to explore the significance of gender dynamics within the home for the organisation and cross-generational transmission of different forms of cultural capital. A set of questions exploring not just income but economic assets more broadly was included in order to generate more precise measures of economic capital. And, drawing on the social capital literature that has been developed in Anglophone social science, we included a set of questions on friendship and social contact networks to measure social capital – something Bourdieu did not attempt in *Distinction*.¹² We explored our respondents' relations to the literary, music, art and media fields, and sport, bodily practices and culinary tastes. The questionnaire was designed to identify three components of cultural capital which, while they necessarily interact with one another, are nonetheless usefully distinguished for analytical purposes: cultural capital as manifested (a) in particular kinds and frequencies of cultural participation, (b) in particular tastes (including dislikes as well as likes), and (c) in particular kinds of cultural knowledge (see Appendix 2).

We were keen to guard against the common tendency in subsequent survey analysis to over-represent legitimate culture. This had arisen in large part because the main source of funding for such data has come from public sector cultural agencies, whose primary concern is to understand who uses the legitimate forms of culture they fund. The result is a systematic skewing of interest towards established cultural domains. We therefore asked about a more representative range of cultural items, with more questions on television than on the visual arts, more on music than on reading and, within these fields, more on 'popular' or 'mainstream' works and genres than on 'established' ones. Our concern to ensure balance in these cultural fields meant that some areas had to be left out of our study, the most important being a range of activities associated with domestic leisure (computer gaming, craft activities, painting and drawing, gardening, DIY, board games and home entertaining) as well as holiday practices, gambling, dance and photography. These choices have consequences for our interpretation, and we shall identify these at appropriate points in our discussion.

The survey component of the study also included an ethnic boost sample, as well as questions exploring ethnic self-identification. Owing to legal restrictions, Bourdieu was not able to include questions about ethnicity in his questionnaire. This had the odd consequence, for a survey conducted in a period of a marked increase in migration to France from its ex-colonial territories, that the Portuguese, Yugoslav, North African, or black workers who were coming to form the core of the French proletariat were, as Jacques Rancière observes, entirely absent from *Distinction* (Rancière, 2004: 197). The inclusion of an ethnic boost sample as a means of exploring the relations of different ethnic groups – majority and minority – to the processes of cultural capital formation is, then, a distinct innovation. Wanting also to take account of the effects of international flows on the organisation of the cultural field, questions were included about country of origin, in order to differentiate between the UK-born and the overseas-born members of

minority ethnic groups. We also included examples of particular books, musical works, or television programmes from a variety of different countries to assess the influence of global cultural flows on the insularity of national cultural fields and new forms of cultural cosmopolitanism.

2.6 Conclusion

In this chapter we have argued for the value of keeping to the spirit of a relational sociology, whilst at the same time questioning the precise ways in which Bourdieu drew links between capitals, habitus and fields in *Distinction*. One of the great strengths of *Distinction* is its empirical richness and, in this spirit, we avoid employing concepts such as cultural capital and habitus except where they better interpret empirical findings. Whereas Bourdieu has been criticised for upholding a reductive, even mechanistic sociology of elite reproduction, we draw out its potential to generate a more open and complex sociology. By opening up field analysis itself, and by working with MCA in association with qualitative as well as more orthodox multivariate analysis, we explore the possible existence of several different kinds of ‘cultural capital’, and we are especially interested in pursuing the argument that contemporary cultural advantage is pursued not through cultivating overtly exclusive forms – of snobbishness or modernist abstraction – but through the capacity to link, bridge, and span diverse and proliferating cultural worlds.

In pursuing this project, rather than seeking to delineate the power of reified, ‘master’ variables, we prefer instead to recognise the complex connections within the cultural domain itself. This does not mean, though, that we abandon a concern with identifying the core forces at work in the organisation of cultural practices and tastes. This becomes a matter, in Part III, of identifying the ‘forces’, ‘processes’, ‘powers’ and ‘emergent properties’ that can be detected in the organisation of fields in order to grasp their core dynamics, without construing these as the manifestations of most efficient causal variables or underlying structures. Nor does it mean that we are uninterested in the ways that cultural practice contributes to group formation and integration. In Part IV we examine the complex forms of clustering and divisions in cultural practice by means of which boundaries are drawn, identities displayed and distinctions asserted. We turn first, though, in Part II to the principles and procedures informing our own MCA and the ways in which we have interpreted our findings to overcome some of the difficulties we have identified in our discussion of Bourdieu’s methodologies.

Part II

Mapping tastes, practices and individuals

3 Mapping British cultural taste and participation¹

3.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the patterning of cultural life² across seven fields – music, reading, visual arts, television, film, sport and eating out.³ We take a broad overview, partly to introduce issues addressed in greater detail in the later chapters. We examine how far cultural activities are distinguished from, or associated with, each other. We consider how far there are systematic homologies between different cultural fields. We also explore how far systematic cultural cleavages might be associated with the operation of cultural capital. In addressing these concerns, this introductory analysis also serves as an overture to the arguments that we return to, and finesse, as the book progresses. Rather than a divide between high and popular culture, we find a primary cleavage between those who appear culturally active and engaged in a wide range of activities, and those who seem relatively detached with a more limited range of cultural interests and activities. We demonstrate that this overlaps with class and educational inequalities. We also bring out the significance of age and gender for the structuring of cultural life.

Our initial challenge was to find a way to reduce the many survey questions about cultural taste, participation and knowledge to provide a platform for synthetic analysis. We use multiple correspondence analysis (MCA), a form of principal components analysis to plot people's cultural preferences. By arraying an unusually wide range of cultural tastes and practices for inspection, the clustering and fracturing of tastes can be interpreted from the resulting graphs and accompanying statistical information. The method provides a visualisation of the ordering of the cultural landscape. It does not presuppose any particular ordering of practices; rather, through inspecting the separation, or proximity, of different cultural activities, we are able to infer whether an uneven distribution of cultural capital can be detected from the 'cultural map' itself. Of course, like any map, it has been constructed in a particular way, and does not represent culture in an unmediated manner. Our project's research questions, whilst wide-ranging, are not exhaustive, so readers should note how we operationalise and

define the measures used to construct the space of lifestyles whose different dimensions we depict as a series of 'cultural maps'. Nonetheless, the attraction of this approach is that its inductive character allows us to interpret and report on the patterns revealed in our data without pre-judging what the key relationships should be.

Three further features strengthen its appeal. First, the cultural maps we produce do not smuggle assumptions about the social determinants of taste into them. They are constructed purely with respect to the organisation and mutual relationships between aspects of cultural life itself. In this respect they challenge the reasoning that animates conventional sociological multivariate methods, which are predominantly concerned with assessing the impact of certain 'causal' variables on specified outcomes. The value of this explanatory strategy is the subject of considerable methodological debate within the social sciences (e.g. Abbott, 2000; Goldthorpe, 2000). Although this debate is important, we do not wish to be dogmatic: our view is that MCA can be used alongside more conventional 'variable centred' forms of analysis.⁴

A second attractive feature of MCA is that, once our cultural maps are constructed, we can superimpose social categories on to them, to determine whether these 'supplementary variables' are associated with the cultural landscape. The approach involves 'overlaying' social characteristics on to different dimensions of the space of lifestyles, without changing the coordinates of the cultural maps themselves. It does not, therefore, violate our concern to develop descriptive maps of the cultural space, yet at the same time it allows us to illuminate and interpret the cultural landscape.

The third valuable feature is that we can locate not only the mean points of cultural variables, but we can also identify every single individual in our survey on the same coordinates. Through inspecting the 'cloud of individuals' we can gain further insights into the organisation of cultural practices by assessing what kinds of individuals are located close to each other. An especially valuable feature of working with the 'cloud of individuals' is its potential for linking qualitative interviews to positions on the cultural map; we can ascertain where every interviewee is located, and link their survey responses to their oral testimonies. This creates a rich dialogue between quantitative and qualitative data, as we demonstrate in Chapter 4.

This chapter proceeds by reporting on how we constructed our cultural maps. The second section discusses the four key axes differentiating cultural taste and participation. The first axis differentiates on the basis of 'engagement' and 'disengagement', whilst the second distinguishes 'contemporary/commercial' from 'established' cultural tastes. The third axis distinguishes likes and dislikes for fictional genres focused on personal concerns from preferences for watching factual and more physically robust genres and sports, which we label as 'inward' and 'outward'. The fourth partitions 'voracious' from 'moderate' cultural usage. We discuss differences from the arguments made by Bourdieu in *Distinction*. The third section examines the relationship between the cultural patterns identified and the socio-demographic characteristics of the survey respondents. In conclusion

we provide a preliminary general sketch of the structuring of cultural taste in contemporary Britain.

3.2 Using multiple correspondence analysis

Multiple correspondence analysis involves patient attention to, and careful construction of, that which is to be explained – the distribution of cultural practices in the population. Preparation requires the selection of a meaningful and relevant set of items drawn from the questionnaire. Our interest in homologies between fields required the inclusion of information on several fields. It was also important, on the basis of our a priori theoretical reasoning, to include measures of both participation and taste. The items used to construct the space of lifestyles cover seven fields – music, reading, television, film, visual arts, sport and eating out. The process was iterative. We used 41 questions, 17 regarding participation and 24 on taste, generating 168 active modalities, to capture the overall pattern and thereby to define the distances between individuals. The questions were as follows:

Television: 2 questions about participation, and 3 about taste = 5

Films: 1 question about participation and 2 about taste = 3

Reading: 2 questions about participation and 7 about taste = 9

Music: 5 questions about participation and 7 about taste = 12

Visual art: 4 questions about participation and 2 about taste = 6

Eating out: 2 questions about participation and 2 about taste = 4

Sport: 1 question about participation and 2 about taste = 3

Some fields have more questions than others, but there is a reasonable span in all of them. For music and reading, all respondents were asked to assess their liking of particular named genres, so that preferences for each genre are shown as like, indifference, or dislike.⁵ On the other hand, those questions which ask about favourite genres of television programmes, film, visual art, sport and eating out allow respondents to select their favourites, and least favourite, from a list. So, unlike music and reading, the genres in these fields are coded as favourite or least favourite when selected by 5 per cent or more of the sample.⁶ Questions asking about the frequency of participating in specific leisure pursuits were recoded into three categories (high, low, never). The result is to equalise somewhat the modalities – that is, tastes and practices – from different cultural fields. The 168 active modalities cover a wide diversity of cultural fields, from television (23 modalities), film (20 modalities), reading (25 modalities), music (38 modalities), visual art (23 modalities), eating out (16 modalities) and participation in leisure and sport (21 modalities). Readers should bear in mind the high representation of music in the map. The MCA analysis refers to 1529 individuals drawn only from the main sample. We excluded 35 individuals, 32 who had failed to respond to four or more of the questions about taste in reading, and three who had replied to no more than one question on visual art.

Like other forms of multivariate analysis, MCA proceeds from a contingency table. Specifically, the columns indicate binarised responses (yes or no) to questions, and there is one row for every individual. From the contingency table, MCA assesses the relationship between the different modalities and identifies axes that separate out responses relationally, *vis-à-vis* every other individual's response, in order to plot the symbolic distances between items. Putting it crudely, if everyone who liked 'westerns' also liked 'soap operas', the two modalities would be located in the same position, and if no-one liked both, then they would be located at diametrically opposite points on the figure. Where items appear along different axes, the figures give a visually simple way of inspecting which tastes and practices (modalities) go together and which do not.

Employing the appropriate tests,⁷ we determined how many axes should be interpreted to best characterise the space of lifestyles. We interpret four axes, the first of which accounts for around half the complete variance (modified cumulative rate of 48 per cent), the second of which accounts for nearly 23 per cent of the variance, the third of which for 7 per cent and the final one 4 per cent. The total cumulative modified weight of the first four axes is 82 per cent. Once we get to axis 5, little additional variance is explained, implying that four axes provide an adequate summary of taste and participation.

Multiple correspondence analysis also allows us to estimate the contribution of active modalities by cultural field, according to whether they measure taste or participation, for the four principal axes. Table 3.1 shows that on the first, primary axis, most (60 per cent) of variance is accounted for by measures of participation, indicating that people's actual attendance or non-attendance at various cultural events differentiates most sharply. We can see too, that music, visual art and reading are most important to this differentiation.

On the second axis, by contrast, measures of taste discriminate more (63 per cent). Musical taste is by far the most powerful differentiating feature, although film also scores relatively highly. The third axis is based even more strongly on distinctions in taste (85 per cent), this time with television, film, reading and sport contributing strongly. On the fourth and weakest axis, there is a more even pattern between participation and taste, with visual art especially well represented.

We can make some preliminary inferences about homology between fields by considering the relative contributions of variables from the seven cultural fields to each axis. All axes have at least two cultural fields that are heavily represented, indicating that no axis differentiates on the basis of a single field. To put this another way, it is not the case that the first axis is derived solely from music, the second from visual art, and so on. Some homologies exist across fields. It is also reassuring that the fields of music and reading are not closely aligned among the four axes. If they had been, this might suggest that the format of the questions about music and reading had artefactually structured the patterns detected. It follows that there are some homologies between the fields: on the first axis, for instance, music, reading and visual art have some common properties. At the same time, these homologies are far from perfect. Fields vary significantly in the extent to which they differentiate groups of individuals: music comes over as easily producing most

Table 3.1 Contribution of modalities from each cultural subfield to the variations on each axis, multiple correspondence analysis

Subfields	Axis 1			Axis 2			Axis 3			Axis 4		
	Participation	Taste	Total	Participation	Taste	Total	Participation	Taste	Total	Participation	Taste	Total
TV	4.5	2.9	7.4	0.2	6.5	6.7	0.2	22.1	22.3	9.3	3.2	12.5
Film	3.7	2.1	5.8	2.9	10.2	13.1	1.3	18.0	19.2	2.1	4.5	6.6
Literary/reading	9.5	13.5	23.0	2.6	7.0	9.6	0.9	18.3	19.2	6.3	9.0	15.3
Music	14.9	10.3	25.2	19.5	25.9	45.4	2.5	7.5	10.0	10.4	13.0	23.4
Visual art	21.1	2.6	23.7	4.1	4.2	8.2	1.4	6.8	8.2	22.3	10.1	32.4
Eating	3.6	5.7	9.3	4.0	5.4	9.4	3.4	1.4	4.8	4.4	3.1	7.6
Sport	3.0	2.4	5.4	3.7	3.8	7.6	5.3	11.0	16.3	0.8	1.4	2.2
Total	60.4	39.6	100.0	37.0	63.0	100.0	15.1	84.9	100.0	55.6	44.4	100.0

differentiation, contributing above the mean to all the four axes and dominating our second axis. Looking at only the first two, most important, axes, television, eating out and sport, by contrast, differentiate relatively little. The inference is that, in general, musical taste and participation are more culturally differentiated than is television viewing, for instance. There is no pure homology between cultural fields, suggesting that fields may operate differently, an issue which we take up later.

3.3 The space of lifestyles: a cultural map of Britain in 2003

Having interpreted the axes in general terms, let us now proceed to our cultural maps by inspecting in detail the clustering and separation to be found between various forms of cultural participation and taste on each of the four axes. Figure 3.1 (see the coloured section) maps the coordinates of each of the modalities constituting the space of lifestyles that contribute significantly (i.e. above the mean) to the first – and most important – axis. To aid interpretation of the associations across cultural fields, modalities concerning participation are marked in black diamond-shaped symbols and those for taste are in red squares. The size of the symbol, shown as the shape next to the name of the modality, is proportional to the numbers of people who fall into a given category: thus we can see that more people like soap operas than modern literature. Where a participation symbol has 0 it means that something is never done, when it has 1 it is occasionally done, and 2 means it is done frequently. When a taste symbol has a minus sign this means it is disliked, a positive sign indicates it is liked, while an equal sign indicates neutrality. For paintings possessed, books read and hours of television watched, category labels show a numerical range.

Figure 3.1 reveals that on the first axis, which is arrayed from the left to the right of Figure 3.1, most of the likes and forms of participation are on the right-hand side, and many dislikes and lack of participation are on the left-hand side. Participation has the highest importance on the first axis. To be more specific, on the left the only positive values are for liking western films, enjoying ‘social’ sports (namely snooker and darts), liking to eat in fish-and-chip restaurants, and watching more than 5 hours television a day. On the right side, there is only one negative value – disliking eating in fish-and-chip restaurants. The actual range of tastes and forms of participation that appear on the right side is varied. The most extreme right-hand location is for attending the opera frequently, followed by eating at French restaurants regularly, going to orchestral concerts, to the theatre, to rock concerts and liking Impressionist art. These activities are counter-posed most strongly to eating fish and chips, never eating out at all, having no books and never going to museums. In short, this most significant of divisions separates those who take part in an extended range of cultural activities and those with fewer involvements in the measures of participation and taste that we used to construct our MCA. At this point we reiterate that we measure participation only in terms of the variables included in the MCA.

This finding is important since it does not suggest that the prime cultural division in contemporary Britain lies between ‘high’ and ‘popular’ culture. Rather than

opposing 'legitimate' cultural forms (e.g. opera going) with 'popular' activities (such as urban or heavy metal), it opposes those who are engaged in both established and popular cultural forms on the one hand (classical and rock music), with those who participate rarely or never (with a few exceptions like watching a lot of television). This suggests a primary tension between the 'engaged' and 'disengaged' – though we return to, and qualify, this observation shortly.

Figure 3.2 highlights modalities separated on the second (top–bottom) axis. Some of these also appeared in Figure 3.1, which means that they contribute disproportionately to both axes. A heavy preponderance of variables indicating taste, marked by red squares, is evident.

What kinds of likes are pulled apart here? Unlike the first axis, which differentiates 'likes' and 'participation' (on the right) from 'dislikes' and 'abstention' (on the left), these are mixed together on the second axis. Concentrated at the top of the graph are frequent participation at the cinema and the pub, also going to night clubs and rock concerts, but never to orchestral concerts. Musical taste contributes a lot to this section of the space. Prevalent tastes include strong liking for urban, heavy metal and rock music, and dislikes of classical music and country and western. A liking for modern art and a dislike of landscapes also register. So too does a liking for horror movies and television comedy programmes. Science fiction, fantasy and horror stories are popular reading material.

Towards the bottom of Figure 3.2 we also see musical tastes prominently represented, but this time mainly more established forms: liking classical music, country and western music, and film musicals. These are associated with liking racquet sports (such as tennis and badminton), television news programmes, landscape art, drama, going to French restaurants, and nature and historical television documentaries, and there is also a strong dislike for many of the musical tastes recorded at the top of Figure 3.2. A series of cultural practices, ranging from going to opera, orchestral concerts, theatres, stately homes, art galleries and musicals also cluster with these tastes. This lower part of axis 2 picks out most of the established, traditional forms of culture that we asked about in our survey and indicates that there does appear to be a cultural separation between what we might see as traditional from contemporary cultural forms, especially in the field of music. This separation between culturally established and more legitimate forms and newer, more commercial forms of culture may be evidence of a change in the *modus operandi*, or the content, of cultural capital, an issue which we explore further below.

Figure 3.3 examines those modalities contributing above the mean to the third axis, arrayed from top to bottom. Several of these modalities also appear on previous figures. Even more than axis 2, taste questions predominate on axis 3, where likes and dislikes are directly counter-posed. The top of Figure 3.3 highlights a liking for romance films, soap operas, portrait paintings and television drama. On the other hand, landscapes, nature and history television documentaries, sport, club sports, war films and the news are disliked. We see almost a mirror image at the bottom of Figure 3.3. The graph separates a liking for fictional genres focused on personal concerns and home-centred activities at the top, from preferences for

more factual programmes recording public or outdoor activities, like sports, at the bottom. We conceptualise this as contrasting the expression of inwardly and outwardly oriented dispositions.

Finally, Figure 3.4 presents the fourth axis. Including both taste (red squares) and participation (black diamonds) modalities in a more balanced way, it is structured both by active practices and by likes and dislikes, though the former predominate. It is identified most strongly through involvements in visual art and music. In the lower half of the graph we see heavy involvement – heavier than on axis 1 – in attendance at opera, art galleries, museums and orchestral concerts, combined with the most restricted possible television watching (less than an hour during the week or at the weekend). Positive tastes are also in evidence for modern and Renaissance art, modern literature and world music. These features concentrate towards the bottom of the graph towards the right. Closer to the horizontal axis are heavy engagement in cinema, night clubs, and liking for classical music and jazz, and dislike of country and western music and romance fiction. This appears to sketch a dimension of enthusiasm for culturally established performances and for some more intellectually distinguished and legitimate cultural forms. This pattern of engagement might correspond to a voracious form of highbrow orientation to cultural engagement. The northern half of the graph captures more moderate levels of participation – going sometimes, but not very frequently, to museums, theatres, night clubs and concerts – and a fair number of expressions of relative indifference to musical genres like classical, country and western and urban, with a positive preference for landscape art and dislike of Impressionism. If the first axis distinguishes range of participation or engagement, this fourth axis describes a contrast between ‘moderate’ engagement, including some legitimate activities on the one hand, and an enthusiastic and intensive involvement with them on the other, an orientation which might be labelled ‘voracious’ (see Katz-Gerro and Sullivan, 2007).

Four general conclusions can be drawn at this stage of our analysis. First, we can see that the four maps indicate certain homologies between the fields. For instance, on the first axis, those who like Impressionist painting are also likely to like opera and French restaurants. Those who most appreciate modern art, also tend to like science fiction, horror or fantasy stories and heavy metal music. Some fields seem less likely to yield distinctions: preferences for types of television programmes, for instance (though not the amount of time spent watching television), are rarely an element of a distinctive cultural clustering, and nor are film genres preferences. Increasingly prominent in recent decades, these fields are not marked so clearly by differentiation and discrimination as is, in particular, music. This confirms the role that these media play in providing some points of cultural convergence for groups whose tastes might, in other aspects, be sharply divergent (see further, Chapter 8).

Second, many variables are located towards the centre of the map, indicating that they are not part of any distinctive pattern of taste culture. Some, around 10 per cent, appear on none of the graphs. These include, nominating among television programmes, game shows and cookery, gardening and home decoration

programmes as least liked, and police dramas and films as favourites. Dislike of religious books, never going to the opera and liking least eating out in Italian restaurants are others. There are, then, some tastes that do not carry any symbolic 'baggage', and which do not cluster with other distinguishing aspects of cultural life. A dislike for eating in Italian restaurants, for instance, says very little else about other tastes or engagements. Not all aspects and items of cultural life are characterised by tensions and polarities.

Third, we should note how our findings contrast with Bourdieu's. He found active types of consumption, taste and leisure practice on both sides of his first axis. Indeed, it was this which allowed him to differentiate between high and popular culture. We find that participation in public cultural pursuits is only clustered on the right hand side of our first axis. Most of the forms of cultural participation on the right of this axis are located outside the home and then share one or other of three further characteristics: they are either strongly associated with established culture (museums, art galleries), or are forms of commercial entertainment that involve admission charges (cinema, rock concerts, musicals), or they are forms of legitimate culture applying admission charges (opera, theatre, stately homes, orchestral concerts). Such findings initially seem more in line with recent research on social capital and participation, which points to a strong trend in recent years for some groups in the population to become 'disengaged' (Hall, 1999; Li, Savage and Pickles, 2003; Warde, Tampubolon, Longhurst *et al.*, 2003), while others become multiply engaged. That high amounts of television watching is one of the few positive activities to be found on the left of Figure 3.1 could be taken to lend support to the arguments of Robert Putnam (2000) that television is conducive to social 'disengagement' and a crisis in 'social capital'. However, as we discuss later, especially in Chapter 4, this is an argument which further analysis of our data does not support.

Fourth, our data suggest significant differences in the organisation of British contemporary cultural life from that identified by Bourdieu. For example, he distinguished three axes, whereas we have four. This itself can be taken as evidence of greater cultural complexity in our data. In addition, *Distinction* distinguished *avant-garde* 'intellectual' culture from more established, expensive and lavish ('industrialist') forms of culture. We too find a clustering of established taste at the bottom of our second axis, but rather than this being contrasted with *avant-garde*, intellectual activities, it is juxtaposed to popular, commercial forms of activity, especially associated with music. Insofar as we can distinguish 'intellectual' from 'industrialist' culture, this lies on the fourth axis, not the second. We again need to be cautious at this stage at extrapolating from our MCA. In *Distinction*, Bourdieu's analysis uses many specific, named, artists and art works, which allow for more discrimination than our chosen modalities permit. But our analysis so far suggests that an account of cultural capital that focuses on the 'Kantian aesthetic' has little purchase in the contemporary British context. Neither of our two other axes map directly on to Bourdieu's. The third distinguishes inwardly and outwardly oriented dispositions for genres focused on personal rather than public concerns and indoor from outdoor pursuits. The fourth

distinguishes the culturally ‘voracious’ from ‘moderate’ consumption. We cannot make too much of these differences from Bourdieu’s account, since his space of lifestyles was constructed using different indicators, but the disparities invite further reflection.

3.4 Social groups and the space of lifestyles

Readers may already have reflected on whether the four axes are related to social group differences. We reiterate that the cultural map or space of lifestyles that is the composite of these different axes is constructed entirely on the basis of the relative positioning of the cultural modalities and is not generated on the basis of the class, income, or gender characteristics of the respondents. However, the ‘supplementary variables’ for socio-demographic characteristics can be superimposed upon the space of lifestyle, indicating where the mean point of each group is positioned.⁸ We have measures for age, class, education, gender and ethnicity. We can therefore describe group patterns by inspecting the social bases of participation and taste.

A range of factors, all of which are associated with material and educational assets, accounts for the variation between degrees of cultural ‘engagement’ and ‘disengagement’ which structure the first axis. Respondents’ educational qualifications are the most strongly associated with level of cultural engagement.⁹ However, a measure of social class is only a little weaker than education. Twelve occupational classes are monotonically positioned along the axis. Figure 3.5 presents the distribution of these classes, showing that large employers and managers are located firmly on the right of the first axis, and routine workers are clearly on the left. We should emphasise this point: the most important axis differentiating cultural life in contemporary Britain is associated with occupational class. Recall that this first axis is one characterised more by participation than by taste. We can then deduce that class differences are particularly relevant to understanding cultural participation: attendance at concerts, art galleries, museums, stately homes and so on. However, occupational class is not exclusively associated with the differentiation on axis 1. Respondent’s occupational class, education and class of origin all strongly condition the attributes of cultural consumption that load most heavily on to this first, and most important, axis of the space of lifestyles.

Class remains a central factor in the structuring of contemporary cultural practice in Britain: class matters. Whatever social advantage might arise from heavy engagement in cultural activities will accrue to those who are highly educated, who occupy higher occupational class positions, and who have backgrounds within higher social classes. Higher social class is associated with regular attendance at the theatre, museums, art galleries, stately homes, opera, cinema, musicals and rock concerts. It is also strongly associated with owning paintings and reading books. Belonging to the lowest social classes tends to be associated with never doing these things. Tastes are less defined by class, and there are fewer direct oppositions, though: higher class means a dislike for fish-and-chip restaurants, and a preference

for French restaurants, lower classes liking best eating in fish-and-chip restaurants; and tastes in reading, for biographies and for modern literature are diametrically opposed; and so are attitudes towards rock music, with the higher classes liking it, the lower ones disliking it. Our first question is thus answered. The axis that most powerfully indicates the structure of cultural consumption in Britain is one that is directly associated with class position. This is not to say, as we will now see, that other social factors are unimportant, only that they are less important.

Other socio-demographic factors are primarily responsible for affecting cultural consumption on the second and third axes. Variance on axis 2 is primarily associated with age.¹⁰ On this axis neither education nor class variation is important. Much of the dispersion of the cultural items (modalities) can plausibly be attributed to the differences of taste between different age cohorts. Figure 3.6 represents graphically this association in the cloud of individuals. This shows clearly that preferences for the contemporary and commercial practices in the north of the map decrease with each ascending age level, just as preferences for the established practices in the south of the map increase with age.

The variance exhibited by the third axis is strongly conditioned by gender.¹¹ Items to the north in Figure 3.3 are ones with which women are most likely to engage, including television dramas, self-help books, soap operas, romantic fiction. Male preferences lie to the south, and favour watching sport on television and westerns. Note that this axis is mostly an axis of taste. Figure 3.7, a graph of the cloud of individuals along axis 3, shows the degree of separation between men and women on that axis. We analyse gender differences in detail in Chapter 12.

Variation along the fourth axis, which capture intense cultural enthusiasm, is not so strongly identified by the socio-demographic characteristics so far introduced into our analysis. Inspection of the coordinates of the socio-demographic variables on axis 4 shows very minor effects for youthfulness¹² and no others. The pattern of the cultural modalities is one that distinguished omnivorousness from voraciousness. Figure 3.8 captures one element of that distinction, showing that a father's higher education is an important characteristic of those with a voracious orientation. We consider this fourth axis further in Chapter 10, where we examine cultural differentiation between different middle-class groups.

We thus have laid out, in a preliminary manner, the association of different social group characteristics with the organisation of cultural life. Occupational class and education are arrayed on the first, most powerful, axis; age appears on the second; and gender on the third. The differential distribution of class, age and gender on the main axes of the MCA indicates that each of these characteristics has its own specific cultural associations. Of course, their impact occurs in combination for any individual, for these marks of social division intersect with one another. Individuals bear the imprint of their social positioning relative to one another, but always in a manner tempered by their personal trajectories and local circumstances. While certain supplementary social variables – notably ethnicity and geographic location – do not appear as important on any of the four axes, the MCA sets out only broad parameters, and later chapters show both ethnicity and geographic location to be significant. Nevertheless, to characterise

the fundamental social ordering of culture, it is these three sources that are important.

Before moving on, two points about the interpretation of the findings from our MCA should be made. First, the results illustrate well our reservations about Bourdieu's understanding of the unity of the habitus and his interpretation of the principle of the relational organisation of the social in exclusively class terms. Whereas the two main axes Bourdieu derived from his MCA both related to class, in terms of the volume of capital (on his first axis), and the composition of capital (contrasting economic and cultural capital on his second axis), in our case both of these are arrayed on the first axis. As we move through axes 1 to 3, different principles of cultural differentiation operate; when the location of heavy metal appears at the east of axis 1, the north of axis 2, and the south of axis 3, it suggests that it is subject to multiple determinations. It is being younger and male as well as middle class that influences its liking.

Second, the difference between analysis conducted at the level of modalities and analysis at the level of individuals must be appreciated. When modalities appear close to one another in the space of lifestyles, this is a matter of relative positioning: that dining in French restaurants and going to art galleries frequently occupy adjacent spaces means that these two activities go together *more closely* than, for example, do liking fish and chips and going to art galleries – but not that all or even most individuals who like French cuisine go to art galleries. In fact, those whose favourite type of restaurant is French are twice as likely as the average to have been to an art gallery in the last year, but still a quarter of them had not visited a gallery. When we look at the taste profiles of individuals, the degree to which their tastes span not just two but three or more modalities located close to one another in the space of lifestyles is – as Lahire would anticipate – often limited in absolute terms (though there will be a probability significantly greater than chance). Also, individuals whose preferences mainly lie in one section of the space of lifestyles may be passionate devotees of activities located in a different section of that space. This is especially true of modalities that do not show up in the space of lifestyles because they are broadly shared. Take, for example, the association between painting and literature. Liking modern literature and liking Impressionism are closely related tastes on several axes. Yet, those who like modern literature are 1.5 times more likely to choose landscapes than Impressionism as their favourite type of art. This connection between liking modern literature and liking landscapes does not, however, show up in the space of lifestyles because landscape is the favourite of a majority of the population. It is only that the more rare taste for Impressionism registers strongly. In this sense, MCA shows distinguishing rather than common features of tastes. Which associations should be emphasised depends on what is to be explained.

3.5 The class structure of Britain

As we have seen, class, especially if interpreted as based upon a package of assets that includes cultural capital (Savage *et al.*, 2005c; Le Roux *et al.*, 2007),

continues to structure cultural participation and taste. Most variation on the primary axis is attributable to class characteristics, which have, for sociological purposes, been considered responsible for the inter-generational reproduction of privilege. However, the shape of the contemporary class structure has been a major issue among sociologists for decades, with disputes organised around both theoretical axioms and strategies for operationalising class schemas. For reasons of space and the reader's interest, we cannot engage in the debate in any detail here (for a more detailed consideration of the technical aspects of this section, see Le Roux, Rouanet, Savage and Warde, 2007). Nonetheless, we can use the cloud of individuals to lay out a distinctive pattern of the class structure which best corresponds to our cultural map. Individuals from each occupational class can be grouped into an ellipse around their mean point, so that the extent to which individuals in each class deviate from their class norm can be graphically revealed. Analysis of different ways of defining classes can reveal the most efficient ways of grouping individuals to classes so as to reduce variation from this mean point (see also Le Roux, Rouanet, Savage and Warde, 2007, Figure 6 and following pages). On that basis we have concluded that a three-class model best fits the data and this can be presented as a split between a professional–executive class, an intermediate class and a working class. This partition, displayed in the cloud of individuals, is shown in Figure 3.9.

Note four points about this diagram. First it is a model of the class structure which fits most closely the characteristics of our cultural map. This is the class schema which therefore best represents the social and cultural aspects of British life. That is to say, it better reflects a *social* and *cultural* conception of class than do most schemas that focus entirely upon the economic characteristics of occupations. Second, in contrast to Goldthorpe's class schema models, it places lower managerial workers in the intermediate class and lower supervisory workers in the working class, in both instances on the basis of their cultural affinity with others in the class to which they are allocated. Third, it proposes a model that distinguishes a 'small' professional-executive class of professionals, managers in large establishments and large employers (comprising 24 per cent of the workforce), an intermediate class which includes the lower managers (30 per cent) and a relatively large working class, which includes lower supervisors and technicians (46 per cent). The most privileged class is half the size of the working class. Finally, Figure 3.9 shows considerable overlap between classes, reinforcing the point that we are identifying propensities and probabilities, and not determinate relationships. Individuals located in the centre of Figure 3.9 could be from any of the three classes. The mean point of the professional-executive class is in an area encompassed by both the intermediate-class and working-class ellipses, so indicating that significant proportions of these two classes can be found in a similar space to that of the professional and upper managerial classes. Nonetheless, Figure 3.9 also indicates how the three classes are distributed along the first axis in a systematic way, with clear probabilities of people from the three classes being distributed unequally along axis 1. It can also be seen that the professional-executive class is more dispersed on the second axis than is the working class.

The implication is that there is more variation within the professional and upper managerial groupings on the basis of age (axis 2) than within the working class. The working class ellipse in fact is 'flatter', showing more variation on the first axis than on the second.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter has served both as an overture for the sorts of varied and rich material generated by our project and a summary of key findings. First, we have shown clear evidence of the patterning and differentiation of cultural life in contemporary Britain. Preferences concentrate together into meaningful patterns; most cultural tastes are not randomly distributed, each individual cleaving to his or her own idiosyncratic taste. However, only some items contribute to those differential patterns. Notably, choices of television programme and of film are not strongly marked.

Second, there are homologies between fields. Those whose favourite eating-out place is French restaurants tend to like Impressionism, classical music and modern literature. Those who like horror films and watching sport on television will tend to dislike Indian restaurants and listening to classical music. What gives these homologies coherence is not entirely clear at this point, and we return to explore them later.

Third, the patterns can be described in terms of four axes, which together constitute a map of cultural life in the UK. The four axes are characterised by oppositions between: engagement and disengagement in cultural participation; established versus contemporary commercial tastes; genres focused on inward rather than outward-facing dispositions; and moderate versus voracious engagement. This does not easily reduce to – it is indeed much more complex than – a distinction between high and popular, or between legitimate and ordinary culture. There are, of course, some indications of the existence and persistence of what might be called legitimate culture, and preferences for this concentrate in different parts of the maps. Axes 1 and 4 indicate this. However, the prime tension we have detected does not differentiate 'intellectual' from 'popular' culture, but distinguishes forms of participation from non-participation. Also, to some degree, what might have been thought of as popular culture (especially with respect to music) is now located on the same part of axis 1 alongside more 'established' cultural forms.

Fourth, there are clear associations between the cultural patterns revealed and the social structure and distribution of resources. Items on axis 1, as indicated by the superimposition of supplementary socio-demographic variables, are organised in parallel with the distribution of educational qualifications, occupational position and income. Axis 1 is, in Bourdieu's terms, associated with both the volume and composition of capital. Axis 2 is structured by age and axis 3 by gender.

Fifth, these descriptions of distances between the central points of cultural modalities and the mean coordinates of particular social groups conceal much dispersion of actual individuals. Inspection of 'the cloud of individuals' shows, for example, that occupational classes (Figure 3.9), age groups (Figure 3.6) and men

and women (Figure 3.7), are widely dispersed across the space of lifestyles, though that dispersion is neither total nor random. There is much overlap of preferences across adjacent classes and age groups, though not much at the extremes. Whether one thinks of classes and generations as integrated by the cultural preferences that they share, or differentiated by the ones that they contest, is a matter of interpretation that we explore further in later chapters.

Sixth, the nature of the first axis is consistent with Peterson and Kern's arguments about the importance of cultural omnivorousness in contemporary cultural life. Some on the right of the first axis appear to have multiple forms of participation and taste, which span cultural boundaries between established and contemporary cultures. Tastes which span the boundaries of the cultural hierarchy are particularly prevalent among higher status individuals, implying that an omnivorous disposition might be a mark of distinction. Distinguishing between the validity of alternative accounts is something else that our qualitative data permit.

Finally, two phenomena stand out. First, some items are liked and done widely by everyone and have no discriminating effect. Second, other items quite clearly distinguish the educated middle class from the unqualified working class. Both these phenomena are well recognised in the literature and there is no contradiction between them (Holbrook, Weiss and Habich, 2002). We therefore need to turn to more detailed analyses to assess how useful the concept of cultural capital is for interpreting these patterns. This is our concern in Part III. First, though, we look more closely at the location of individuals within the space of lifestyles.

4 Individuals in cultural maps

4.1 Introduction

There is a danger, endemic to sociological analysis, of allowing the cultural and social variables that we mapped in Chapter 3 to be subject to more examination than the characteristics of individuals themselves. We have indicated, however, that this would be problematic in several respects. Following the critique of the reductive concept of habitus by Lahire, we need to explore the degree of consistency and coherence in the cultural practices and tastes of different individuals. Noting Bourdieu's own insistence that cultural capital has an embodied aspect, this will allow us to consider how far individuals articulate different kinds of cultural capital, and if so, what kinds. Can we delineate cultural omnivores, or snobs, or aesthetes, and if so, what kinds of people have these sorts of engagement with cultural life and how are they located in social space?

It is one of the major features of multiple correspondence analysis (MCA) that we can plot individuals on the four axes of our cultural map as well as the mean points of modalities. Because we interviewed a subsample of survey respondents, we can use their transcripts to inform our understanding of the relational organisation of the cultural field. In this, we follow the spirit of Bourdieu who, in *Distinction*, also used qualitative vignettes and case studies alongside his survey analysis. However, he did not work extensively with the 'cloud of individuals', relying mainly on the location of modalities and variables, as we did in Chapter 3.¹ Our approach means that the quantitative and qualitative data are systematically complementary, and this brings three key benefits.

First, data for the same individual in the survey questionnaire and in the qualitative interview can be compared to consider the coherence of elective affinities in cultural space emerging from different research methods (Silva, 2006). We can also assess how far respondents in the interview qualify, or even change (occasionally radically), the views reported in the survey when they are in a different research context (Silva and Wright, 2008). This acts as a check on the validity of the survey measures themselves, whether some particular questions are especially problematic, and whether individuals in specific locations in social space are especially prone to give what might be termed 'discrepant' accounts. By this means, we can go

beyond the universally acknowledged recognition that survey measurements contain error, towards identifying the social and cultural significance of those 'errors'.²

Second, the qualitative interviews allow further assessment of the salience of the results of the MCA. If the accounts of individuals located in similar parts of the space of lifestyles turn out to be radically different, the value of the maps themselves would be diminished. We are thus able to assess the value of the axes by exploring the degree of complementarity in the accounts of those who are located close to each other in the cultural maps.

Third, and most important, information from the qualitative interviews allows more extensive interpretation of the axes themselves. In Chapter 3, we interpreted the axes only on the basis of responses to the survey, showing for instance that the first axis differentiates those who participate in public cultural activities from those who do not. Interviews let us consider whether those on the left of the space of lifestyles, who appear to be culturally disengaged, report activities not included in the survey, thus refining our understanding of the first axis. Furthermore, their narrative form means we can explore whether different positions on the map correspond to different ways in which people talk about their cultural engagement and activities.

In this chapter we focus on interviewees positioned in the 'cloud of individuals' along axes 1 and 2.³ In exploring these individuals we make two analytical points. First, we show that we need to differentiate between cultural engagement and wider forms of social engagement. We explicitly show that those who are culturally disengaged are not to be seen as 'socially excluded' or somehow devoid of social interaction of various kinds. Second, in exploring how culturally engaged individuals talk about their tastes, we show that there are very few clear articulations of snobbery or elitism. Instead, we see a much more concerned attempt to articulate a determination to appreciate and take part in a range of diverse cultural activities. We explore the relationship of this discourse to the idea of cultural omnivorousness that we have introduced in Chapter 2. We therefore show that Bourdieu's differentiation of the Kantian aesthetic from the culture of the necessary does not fit on to our respondents' accounts as much as does a contrast between a confident familiarity with diverse cultural practices, on the one hand, and the appeal of enthusiasms that mark escape from the 'daily grind' on the other.

4.2 Individuals in the space of lifestyles

Figure 4.1 shows the locations of all the individuals surveyed, positioned in relation to axes 1 and 2, and highlights the names of the 22 individuals from the main sample whom we interviewed in their homes. We can see that the interviews are distributed through each of the quadrants of the MCA, with four in the top left quadrant, eight in the top right (and more closely located towards the centre of the figure), five in the bottom left and five in the bottom right.

Figure 4.1 gives reassurance that our interviewees are drawn from across our cultural map. The spread is satisfactory given that the theoretical basis for selecting respondents for interview was to differentiate as much as possible between

contrasting social groups. We selected in terms of (1) cultural capital composition (as indicated by educational qualification), (2) presence of dependent children, (3) a spread of geographical location in the UK, and (4) five types of household subdivided by a 'white' and 'ethnic' composition.⁴ We have somewhat more cases on the far right-hand side – Maria Derrick, James Foot, Seren Star – but we also have two on the far left, Majid Raza⁵ and Margaret Staples. Axis 2 has a greater range, between Hilda Mcgee at the top and Sally-Ann Lewis at the bottom.

Let us begin by assessing the accounts of everyday life practices offered by respondents on the opposite ends of axis 1. To what extent can we see those at the 'culturally engaged' end elaborating an account of themselves connected to people similar to themselves? How far can those at the culturally disengaged side of the map be identified as more generally isolated and 'socially excluded'? Certainly, turning to Margaret, on the culturally disengaged side, an impression of isolation is suggested by the interviewer's report about how difficult it was to find her house, located along remote lanes in the Northern Irish countryside. However, once inside, there was a warm welcome, and the notes go on to comment that:

The Staples live on the family farm in Northern Ireland where Frank was raised and where he has worked all his life. Recently his father died and he inherited it in entirety. His mother still lives nearby in his childhood home. About six years ago he married Margaret who grew up in a city nearby. Together they designed and built the bungalow where they now live with their three young children.

Her survey responses indicate why Margaret appears at the left of the space of lifestyles. She has not heard of the film directors Ingmar Bergman, Pedro Almodovar, Mati Rathnam, or Jane Campion. Although she likes who-dunnits and romances, and has read Jane Austen and John Grisham, she only reads about five books a year. She dislikes most forms of music (apart from modern jazz) and knows little about visual art, her only positive preference being for performance art, although we do not know the terms in which she understands this. She hardly ever goes out to cultural venues, the only exception being an occasional trip to the theatre (on birthdays and special occasions) and to eat out (mostly at pubs and hotels). She has little current interest in sports, apart from being an enthusiastic swimmer.

The interview clearly brings out some concomitants of these patterns. Her life is constrained by the demands of the family farm, her own work with disabled adults in a care home, which she finds 'hard work mentally and physically', and looking after a daughter aged 3 and two sons, aged 4 and 1. She has recently decided to quit her job to rear poultry and sell eggs and is soon going to do this once the two huge poultry houses, at foundation stage, are built. She wants time for her family. Her intense involvement with her children is a key focus of her life:

Margaret: No, no, because I need to be at home. I feel you know there's ... Billy has been off with a bug and the child's come home today with four

books of homework to do and it's all to be done for tomorrow and that's an awful lot of work you know what I mean. That'll take me and Billy two and half hours to do. To do it right. ... So we came home from school at two o'clock, there was Speech and Drama till three. So we're doing an hour there, leaving, doing the Speech and Drama, coming home, getting stuck into it, doing tea and then getting stuck into it again.

The interview hence reveals forms of activity and engagement not gathered from the survey, particularly home- and neighbourhood-based leisure interests. Her cultural disengagement is related to the demands on her time from myriad social relations. Although Margaret's leisure is home based, on Sundays the family regularly goes for long walks and attends church. She socialises with friends in couples, mostly entertaining at home. Sometimes the men get to watch sport on TV while the wives spend time with the children and cooking. Margaret has a very active social life based on the school networks. Her children's activities are a central part of her socialising with others:

Margaret: It's like whenever I take Billy swimming lessons, you know ... you know ladies that have their children there [...] it's amazing how you meet people and get to know people. And so you see those people every time you go. ... Because of the children now, you see... it involves a lot of things, your time's taken up, you know. If I'm not working, the days I'm not working, I'm doing things with them. On the days that I'm working, Frank then takes over from me.

Margaret's husband, Frank, plays the cornet in a 32-member brass band in the local village. He is the chairman, and organises events and places where to practice. They practice once a week and more often near Christmas time. He also plays 'a bit' of piano. He likes classical music and listens to Classic FM radio. He watches the *Last Night of the Proms* and has always been very fond of Abba, owning collections of their hits. They do lots of concerts for charities. He loves football and rugby, and watching Formula One.

In short, this interview suggests that the level of cultural disengagement as measured by relations to legitimate forms of culture on our first axis should be carefully distinguished from *social* engagement, of which there is plenty of evidence, especially of an informal and familial nature. Margaret and Frank may be on the left of the first axis, but they have active social lives organised around cultural activities our first axis does not tap into. We should be careful to distinguish disengagement from the cultural practices on the right-hand side of our first axis social isolation.

Compare the individual placed furthest to the right, Maria Derrick, whose survey responses indicate that she never watches television, but might watch films directed by Spielberg, Bergmann or Hitchcock, and that she would make a point of watching Almodovar. She is a book fan, liking who-dunnits, science fiction, biographies,

self-help books and religious books. She claims, possibly implausibly, to have read 500 books the previous year. She is an enthusiast of jazz, rock, classical and heavy metal music. She is keen on visual arts, and likes Van Gogh and Picasso – though she had also seen Tracey Emin, L. S. Lowry, J. M. W. Turner and Andy Warhol, but does not like them. Maria's omnivorous and voracious tastes, spanning 'popular' and 'high' culture, are clearly evident.

Maria is hence strongly engaged in cultural activities, yet, as her interview indicates, this is associated with, and partly accounted for by, her physical mobility problems. She is seriously disabled by her long-term ME (myalgic encephalomyelitis), rarely visits leisure venues of any kind⁶ and is on disability benefit, but is highly culturally engaged within her home, especially through her use of the Internet. She even met her current partner, who has recently moved from the south to the north of England to live with her, through the Internet. To some extent, cultural enthusiasm is related to her practical difficulties in socialising informally with work colleagues, friends and family:

Maria: I'm not able to work, I'm in a wheelchair and I can't leave the house. I can drive but I need somebody with me to get the wheelchair out of the car and to push it. I'm in pain 24 hours a day, the pain is so bad that I'm on opiates and it still comes through and I need stronger. So being able to potter around the house and cope... to me, is a godsend compared to how it could be.

Thus it is her tastes and domestic activities, rather than participation in public events, which result in her position on the cultural map. Maria's engagement is intimately related to her intense use of the Internet:

Maria: The only thing is the PC, being on the PC.

Interviewer: How do you like that?

Maria: I like being on the Internet and I like playing games on the PC.

Interviewer: What sort of Internet sites do you go to and what games do you play?

Maria: At the moment I'm spending all my time on support groups for my gynae problem but, we, because we've got broadband we leave one PC on, we've got two PCs, mine and there's Fruit Bat's, you can just hear a hum in the background ... that's Fruit Bat's, because he's mad on PCs ... We always have one left on and if we're doing something and something crops up in the conversation – oh, what's the answer to that? Oh I wonder what? Or maybe if? We go on the Internet and check it out so it's a reference tool that we use an awful lot. Play games on line as well, that's how we met, Fruit Bat and I ...

Maria shows that intense cultural engagement need not be associated with significant face-to-face, public social activity. Indeed her cultural voraciousness is premised on her difficulties in participating in public activities. In this respect she is atypical of the individuals around her in the space of lifestyles, indicating

how particular circumstances, idiosyncrasies and simple serendipity will produce some heterogeneity among individuals located close to one another.

The cases of Margaret Staples and Maria Derrick are interesting in both endorsing, yet also qualifying and illuminating the tensions we explored in Chapter 3, and in indicating how familial and household relations are linked to the organisation of axis 1. Other interviews confirm the differentiation of cultural and social engagement. Joe Smith is an interesting case. He is placed on the left of axis 1 because he has little interest in, or knowledge of, established cultural practices and forms. He hardly ever reads, and rarely goes to any specific leisure venue (theatre, cinema and so on), with the exception of visits to the pub, of which he is fond. Yet he is also highly socially embedded. Living in a small village in the south of England, where he had been 'born and bred', Joe has a sister living two doors away, and his parents are three doors away. He is interested in sport and popular music. However, he works very long hours and this clearly affects the time he has available for leisure pursuits, and a young baby further decreases his potential engagement. Nevertheless, he enjoys an active social life partly focused around his favourite sport, football:

Joe: Yeah, we just play on Sunday mornings, it's just a social type thing really. Yeah, I suppose that's part of the spirit. We have a good social life after football in the pub on Sundays and we all get out of bed to play football, we're all there for the same reason, we don't always win but we're all committed

This sense of a strong local, informal, social life is confirmed by the account of his wife, Edie. Joe and Edie's stories again show that avoidance of formal cultural activities does not result in general social disengagement; they have local and kin-based connections, not captured by our survey instrument.

The case of Hilda McGee, neighbouring Joe on the map, shows similar local and family attachments and cultural involvements. She was born and brought up in the Northern Ireland village where she was living when interviewed. The interview was interrupted by Hilda's need to answer the front door on several occasions. About her extended family she says, 'we all live kind of together'. She is one of seven children, and her mum has nine 'grandkids'. Hilda works in a shop, and knows and chats daily to lots of customers and enjoys it. She talks of exchanging books (science fiction and biographies) with friends and siblings, listening to music with friends of the family, 'pulling out a karaoke machine' belonging to her niece 'for a bit of fun'. Her two children go to the same primary school that she went to, and the headmaster is still the same person as when she was there. Commenting about her fulfilled life, she says:

Hilda: ... people wouldn't call this a city, but it's a busy wee town and it's not as if – like don't get me wrong – I would not like to go trekking and over fields and I'm happy enough to sit in the comfort of my own house watching the TV [laughs]. Watching nature [on TV].

Again, lack of formal cultural engagement is compensated for by considerable informal involvement in kin-based and local circles, and in home-based cultural activities. The same is true for Nameeta Raza and her husband Majid, both from Pakistan. The lack of engagement recorded by Nameeta in the survey was amplified in the interview with her husband, which confirmed that household members shunned all formal leisure venues. Nonetheless, an extensive set of family connections was revealed during the interview itself, when grandchildren turned up with their mothers to visit. In addition, it was also clear that cultural contact with Pakistani sources is maintained by the omnipresence of the satellite television.

Let us now turn to axis 2, which we showed in Chapter 3 is related predominantly to tastes, positioning those who prefer more contemporary or commercial cultural forms at the top, and established or traditional forms at the bottom. To investigate how spatial distance coincides with social distance in the symbolic space of the cultural map, we look at four cases, two at the bottom (one on the right and one on the left of the space) and two at the top (again one each on the right and the left of axis 2).

Sally-Ann Lewis is in the lowest position, on the right, in Figure 4.1 She is white, aged 75 and recently widowed. She lives on her own in a prosperous middle-class area of a small town in Northern Ireland, in the house she and her husband had built themselves, following an architect's design, 49 years earlier. She exemplifies a 'traditional' individual, having been born and lived in this town all her life except for a period of studies and training to be a nurse. She married a doctor, and has a son and a daughter, with whom she has regular contact. As a doctor's wife, she says, she never worked. She is nostalgic and conservative in her taste: about television programmes she says, '... they were much better than they are today'. She dislikes soap operas because 'they are so unnatural'. She didn't used to go much to the cinema because her husband had a bad knee and couldn't sit for very long. But she recalls enjoying older film genres, notably *Gone with the Wind*, and also going to the opera and musicals. She enjoys reading biographies and romances and reads two newspapers every day. Her dress style is 'classic', with 'nice tailoring'. Eating out is in 'nice, proper, restaurants' or a wine bar. She plays golf and bridge, and does pottery, crafts and sewing. She likes landscape paintings – but only those she feels she has a connection with. Understanding is a big part of her appreciation, which she says applies to music, ballet, paintings and so on. In many respects Sally-Ann typifies, for her generation, a fit between professional position and established and legitimate cultural preferences.

Ruth Richards is also white, 67 years old, and a widow living alone, who is positioned in the bottom left of Figure 4.1, but more centrally than Sally-Ann. She has 11 children, five daughters and six sons, all still living nearby with children of their own. She is in poor health. She has lived the last 14 years in a ground-floor flat in a housing scheme on the outskirts of a Scottish city. Television occupies a lot of her daily life – she likes soaps (she has watched *Coronation Street* since it started) and police dramas like *Touch of Frost*, *The Bill* and *CSI*. Like Sally-Ann she is nostalgic, affirming that '... programmes are no longer as good as they used

to be'. She speaks with great confidence about older films, relating their plots, mentioning James Cagney and Humphrey Bogart. She also claims to 'have a long range in music', having the radio on all day and all night:

Ruth: *Music of the World* you can turn in on, it might be Indian music, it might be something you really like, or you might turn it on and it's hillbilly or blue-grass.' [...] I still like classical music. I've got Ken Dodd singing the classical stuff, I have Donald Pearce...

Interviewer: But would you just rely on the radio to play you that?

Ruth: Well, I've got CDs. I've got *The Three Tenors* on CD. [...] Mario Lanza, I like him... rock and roll, I love rock and roll. [...] I don't like heavy rock, heavy metal.

It is striking that both Sally-Ann and Ruth mention a number of 'established' items like classical music, musicals, old films and the news, which position them at the bottom of the map in relation to axis 2. Yet, they are at different poles of axis 1. Their referents are traditional and established, but highbrow for Sally-Ann (live orchestral concerts, opera and university) and middlebrow for Ruth (CDs of the Three Tenors). Yet we should not forget that they have some dispositions in common: both remark that televised programmes used to be better, suggesting a certain nostalgic and conservative cultural orientation, associated with their age, which assigns them to a similar coordinate on the second axis.

Rachel Griffiths, at the top right of Figure 4.1, is 26 years old. She is a mixed-race white and Afro-Caribbean and a lone parent of a six-year-old daughter. She is studying for a degree. She lives in a council house in a large northern English town, waiting for a mortgage approval to buy her own house. Her parents live five minutes away. She is in full-time temporary employment as a social worker. Her cultural interests are contemporary: her favourite television programmes are *Sex in the City*, *Shameless* and *EastEnders*. She finds *EastEnders* is '... like in real life. You like a good little bit of gossip from other people'. Favourite film genres are who-dunnits and mysteries, her favourite film being *Scarface*, '...with lots of action and a love story too'. She likes to read biographies, citing *A Child Called It* by David Pelzer and *Spice Girl*, Mel B's autobiography. She enjoys a variety of music, but dislikes heavy metal, country and western and classical. She likes Indian food. To keep fit she does Thai boxing.

Rachel clearly likes more contemporary culture, and the items in her repertoire are all of commercial cultural forms, like Joe Smith discussed above. Yet, within her repertoire, Rachel includes liking modern art and Indian food, placing her to the right, well away from Joe with his strong liking of televised sports and many dislikes for contemporary as well as established culture (see Figure 3.2). Both Rachel and Joe are young parents, who face limits of time and money in their cultural participation. Neither likes the traditional and established cultural forms held dear by Sally-Ann and Ruth. Both go to pubs and night clubs, but never to orchestral concerts, and dislike classical music and country and western.

The array of likes and dislikes presented in the interviews corroborates the existence of a division between established and contemporary culture and shows a clear divide along class lines among those with ‘traditional’ preferences. Class differentiation is less easily specified among those more orientated towards contemporary cultural items at the top of axis 2, but it does appear as a distinction between the specialised and limited enthusiasm of Joe and the more expansive tastes of Rachel. Her orientation is strongest among individuals positioned towards the right of axis 1. They constitute a cluster of individuals who might be deemed omnivores, and we discuss their profiles more extensively in Chapter 10. This orientation is often accompanied by a certain reflexivity that individuals display when making their cultural choices, as we show in the next section.

To summarise, the interview evidence corroborates the finding that the first axis differentiates those engaged with formal public cultural activities (on the right) from those disengaged from such activities. What the interviews show, in addition, is that those on the left of the map often very successfully make home a focus of both social life and leisure, with television playing a central role in most cases. But this is not an indicator of isolation so much as a space where extended family members and other local companions congregate. Even less is detachment from public culture a mark of social exclusion, or of the decline of social capital in Putnam’s (2000) sense of the concept. This tension between informal and formal cultural engagement is primarily related to occupational class and education, as captured in the cultural map. To this extent our findings confirm established arguments about the importance of class differences in forms of friendship and sociability (Allan, 1998; Allan and Crow, 2001).

4.3 Snobbery and diversity in accounts of taste

Let us now consider whether the accounts of those in different sectors of our cultural map can be read to assist our concern in delineating what kinds of cultural capital might be at play in contemporary Britain.

In her account of American middle-class narratives, Michèle Lamont (1992) argues that it was rare to find strong cultural boundaries being drawn. We also found that those who were culturally engaged did not articulate a clear sense of cultural superiority. Rather, they were more likely to articulate a sense of confidence linked to the ability to handle diverse genres and forms of cultural activity. Consider Jenny Hammett, upwardly mobile from being brought up in a Scottish council estate, and now a creative writer and part-time higher education teacher, living in a modern middle-class estate in a nearby village. Highly culturally engaged and reflexive, she likes television, but not *Big Brother* or reality television more generally. She is tellingly aware of the constructed nature of the social and the relationship between the ‘real’ and ‘perception’:

Jenny: Well ... not long ago, funnily enough, I don’t see a lot of films but I do watch them on the television and my two favourite films of all time,

we had been talking about that, a few ladies – one was *The Matrix* and one was the thing about twelve monkeys, it's just called the *Twelve Monkeys*, with Bruce Willis. And they're both to do with states of mind and how you perceive reality. The Bruce Willis one ... it's about ... does he really travel back in time to try and save the world you know – or is he a mental hospital patient? And *The Matrix*, it's about how you perceive reality as well, and that kind of thing fascinates me, so they're probably my two favourite. But I really like Ken Loach, I loved *Sweet Sixteen*.

Her confidence in deploying genre labels is then used to avoid justifying her views any further: 'Don't ask me to explain. I like the social realism, maybe that ties in with the interest in the news'. She also displays an interest in the social positioning of writers, a recognition of the politics of classification and knowledge:

Jenny: Well, I like the Scottish writers, the contemporary Scottish writers, just now, that's – people like Ann Donovan who was short-listed for the Orange prize, although there's David Mitchell, who's not Scottish but he was short-listed for the Booker a couple of times, I like his as well. I'm not as well read as I would like to be, I read a lot of short stories through the literary magazines, the Scottish literary magazines mostly.

Similar examples of confidence in referring to genres come from Cherie Campbell:

Cherie: I'm a bit of a film buff, I just like so many but I was thinking if you were gonna ... say the film that really sort of encapsulated Hollywood, if you watch it and you always feel it lifts your heart, it has to be *Singing in the Rain*. All the bits are – it's – it's just a perfect movie.

There is here a sense that these cultural forms are designed for 'people like us', with the interviewee feeling at home in connecting and narrating them. It is perhaps not incidental that James Foot, on the far right, an academic, talks about writing books and how he actively produces cultural forms. Maria, discussed above, rather like Jenny, is fascinated by the relationship between representation and reality. To some extent this involves a familiar argument that some genres are different from 'reality', which leads to their being limited by their escapism. Maria does not like soap operas because ...:

they're so depressing and so far fetched. They're supposed to mirror life but you don't see the amount of life that goes on in those soaps in a normal street. For example, you get so much happening in one week and you think: oh! what happens in this street in a week? Virtually nothing. So because they're so unrealistic and they're supposed to portray real life, it annoys me ... I don't like a lot of the game shows because I think

they insult your intelligence. The questions are ridiculously easy. I mean, some of the competitions like *Mastermind* and *University Challenge*, they're better, I do watch those, I forgot to mention it. But the majority, I just can't stand.

This is not the embrace of an abstract Kantian aesthetic relishing its distance from everyday life, but an account of the arbitrariness of cultural forms, and the difficulty of apprehending the 'real' in an environment characterised by 'cultural overload'. It is ultimately an account of the capacity to handle multiple genres in a culturally diverse environment.

These accounts contrast with that of Jim Shaw, who is located towards the centre of Figure 4.1. He seems more defensive about the genres with which he was unfamiliar. Like Joe and Margaret whom we have discussed above, Jim and his wife Jane, both in their 60s, have strong roots in the local area, a former mining district in western Scotland. Jim was a building worker, promoted to a consultant in the building industry, now well off, owning an expensive car and a flat in Majorca. He is an avid television watcher and keen on watching sport, especially football and golf, which he also plays. However, he is uninterested in film and most specific television genres, and it is not easy to draw him out on his liking for film, other than westerns. He is also clearly not much of a reader, apart from a few sports biographies, and has not seen before either of the paintings, by Turner and Hockney, which we introduced for talking about visual art. The general tenor of his relationship to such questions is revealed by the following exchange:

Interviewer: And have you got any additional reasons you might add to explain why? ... I mean you've talked about science fiction not being ...

Jim: Not really. I just, it's not my type.

His predominant interests are for music, where his tastes are wide, including jazz, rock, and classical, but not heavy metal. This interest might explain his location in the right top quadrant of Figure 4.1, as musical tastes predominate in this space. But other aspects of his tastes, though distinctive, are explained blandly, as when he talks about food: 'I suppose you could say I just like steak. I just like plain food, I'm not into fancy stuff'. This advocacy of a 'down to earth', 'plain' sort of taste, is issued with a degree of defensiveness, which is also detectable in other interviewees in the centre of the map. On the left side, towards the centre, Stafford Rathbone is an older Afro-Caribbean man in a single-person household. He works as an assembler and welder in a mid-sized firm. Work figures largely in his life and structures his leisure pursuits. His answers to questions about practices related to television viewing, reading, film and music indicate that he isn't much interested in any of our specified cultural forms. He regularly views sports and the news, both as means of keeping up to date with the world, and in particular the Caribbean, where he comes from. But he has no interest in film at all. He reads the Bible 'to get some understanding of what's happened before you're born or

why it is the world is like what it is today'. Asked about his dislike of 'biographies' or modern literature, Stafford says:

Stafford: Biographies are just only about other people, they talk about life or the people in a wider, in general, not just one specific person because one specific person that's his life.

Interviewer: And what about modern literature? You said that you didn't like that at all.

Stafford: Not really, nothing much to me.

In the stories of Jim and Stafford, neither established nor contemporary culture play much part. They seek information, watch sport on television, affirm a set of leisure time activities. But participation in legitimate culture is not a meaningful aspect of their lives.

While many individuals in different positions on the cultural map express a need to 'escape' the ordering and demands of everyday life, which they do through the use of culture, the manner in which this occurs varies systematically. Cecilia O'Connor, a working-class woman (bottom left quadrant close to the vertical), articulates her attachment to soap operas:

I think it puts you in a different world. I think, you are there and you, like I say, I really do enjoy it and I likes to be in peace and quiet. And I likes to just listen and watch it and I think it just puts you in a different world like you're thinking 'Oh, god. That could really happen to this world'.[...] I think it is escapism. I mean, there's *McLeod's Daughters* on a ..., in the mornings on Sky, and I love it. I do really get into it ... like the sister died the other week, I'm sat here crying my eyes out. [Laughter] You see? There is a sort of escape.

Margaret, while not using the language of escapism, evokes a similar concern, watching *EastEnders* as a means of release from the daily 'grind':

I'm very loyal to *EastEnders*, like I am doing a thing for this crèche because I am in charge of crèche and children's church, I do the Christmas themes at the crèche with the kids and, like if *EastEnders* is on now tonight, I wouldn't do that paint display on the floor, but if it was *Coronation Street* I would be painting away and listening, but I'd be painting away, and so like when it's *EastEnders* everything just gets dropped.

Escapism appears as a means of finding space to forget daily life. The 'unrealistic' nature of these programmes is precisely what disturbs the educated middle-class, while appealing to the less qualified working-class. The more educated see this as a 'crude' way of handling forms of classification, and they are rather critical of this use of cultural activity as a means of relaxation. So when Maria enunciates an 'escapist' refrain, she does so through historical referents,

which confer a certain ‘quality’ and ‘character’ to justify her escape. Talking about her favourite books, she says that she likes:

... the Cadfael ones, although I do find her writing style a little bit heavy going at times. Susannah Gregory, she does, her series are based on Matthew Bartholomew, physician, a lecturer at Cambridge in the fifteenth century. Her books are especially good because they sort of bring the whole world to life. Michael Jecks’ books, he’s set in fourteenth-century Devon. Candice Robb, she’s set in York in the fifteenth century and it’s the whole Mediaeval period. I love history and to have something that makes you think ... set in that period and books that do actually bring it to life, for me it’s just perfect.

Maria suggests that the educated sometimes seek a different form of escapism. Rather than a release from the ‘daily grind’, it is a means of accumulating historical references and is able to illuminate the past by ‘bringing it to life’ through an exercise of imagination. It is possible to accumulate cultural capital while doing so, for instance by relating it to the conversations in their own professional fields, or as assets in their social circles. Similarly, for James it is advocacy of the ‘real’, though a ‘real’ which is recognised to be culturally mediated, that is valuable. In relating his favourite books, he notes that:

Again, I suppose it’s back to that documentary thing that I’m interested in reading about, you know? About real, real things and what I tend to do with biographies is to dip into them, you know?

Cultural confidence and the concern to apprehend the ‘real’ through a careful demarcation between the capacities of cultural forms and genres to ‘bring to life’ the experiences of others, may also be used to criticise certain legitimate genres. Despite having a degree in languages, Maria does not like ‘people like Sartre’, saying: ‘I think sometimes they try to be so convoluted that they just end up going up their own backsides to be honest’.

As Figure 4.1 indicates, those on the right are distinguished to some extent by specific shared cultural tastes and practices. They are also characterised by a particular way of talking about cultural appreciation, which involves comparing genres, recognising the constructed nature of all cultural forms, and then seeking out a ‘constructed real’. This is particularly revealing for individuals at the central right. As Peterson’s omnivore thesis (Peterson and Kern, 1996) would have it, they are not enthusiasts for any one cultural form, and nor are they uncritical of work within genres that they like. Such highly culturally engaged individuals often experience cultural items atypical for their social position (Warde, Wright and Gayo-Cal, 2007). They engage with many types of culture, established and contemporary, and they are discriminating within genres. There are several exemplars among our 22 cases. However, we find no one remotely corresponding to the figure of the snob.

These observations imply cultural dynamics different from those described by Bourdieu. There is no straightforward tension between a functional and practical 'culture of the necessary' associated with the working class (who inhabit the left of Figure 4.1) and a 'Kantian aesthetic', celebrating distance from everyday life (on the right). Our educated middle class cases have little sympathy for purely abstract cultural forms, but seek to evoke, even possess, the 'ordinary' and the 'real' through the act of cultural appropriation itself. We could see this as the reworking of cultural relations in an affluent age, when cultural distinction resides not in claiming social distance, nor in seeking distinction by having time to spare to stop and stare, but rather in overcoming that distance through engagement with a wider range of cultural practices. Cultural capital is expressed as valuing eclecticism, where reflective judgement can be applied to many genres in different contexts. The cultural appreciation of many of those to the left of Figure 4.1 is not a matter of passivity or inactivity arising from permanent and exclusive concentration on material necessity, but more a search for spaces of fantasy and freedom outside the bounds of normal demands, which can be used for escape, fun, entertainment or instruction.

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter has linked evidence from qualitative interviews to locations within the 'cloud of individuals', constructed through the MCA, allowing us to interpret the axes in more elaborate ways than were possible simply through the survey data. While the social lives of those with fewer qualifications and working-class occupations have little place for the niceties of legitimate culture, they are mostly not socially excluded; they mostly have vibrant social lives, and their apparent differences from those of higher social standing appear predominantly related to the different roles of family, kin and friends, and the organisation of leisure and sociability in the home and the local community. The greater role of family and kin tends to promote home-centred socialising, focused predominantly on domestic technologies, whereas the middle classes, with more dispersed social networks, engage more readily in extra-domestic activities.

The first and second axes differentiate according to what might be termed 'cultural confidence'. Put simply, the culturally engaged on the right-hand side of Figure 4.1 are more confident and assured when talking about their cultural life, whereas those on the left-hand side are more hesitant and defensive. Confidence is greater for those individuals towards the central part on the right of Figure 4.1, those who combine a taste for contemporary and traditional items of culture with higher participation. We see this as endorsing Bourdieu's general point, made in the final chapter of *Distinction*, that there is a fundamental difference between those who feel they have the right to pass judgements or hold views, and those who do not. This manifests itself among our respondents as confidence in 'handling' cultural classifications, as experimentation with cultural genres and motifs.

Part III

Cultural fields and the organisation of cultural capital

5 Tensions of the musical field

5.1 Introduction

We showed in Chapter 3 that music is the most clearly separated of all our cultural fields, especially in the second axis. It is the most divided, contentious, cultural field of any that we examine and is central to our concern with probing contemporary cultural dynamics and tensions. In this chapter we supplement our survey responses on respondents' preferred genres with questions about their liking and knowledge of eight specific musical works, and link this to narratives on musical taste generated in our focus groups and household interviews.

We open by rehearsing issues in the study of music, and in particular the argument that the rise of the 'omnivore' has eroded boundaries between tastes for classical and popular music. We then use evidence from our survey to explore the clustering of musical tastes, showing that, although some respondents are omnivorous between cognate genres, the divide between contemporary and classical forms of music is rarely straddled. The third section of the chapter uses qualitative data to show how different kinds of stakes are vested in musical tastes. Those who enjoy rock and contemporary music narrate accounts of engagement, and excitement, which draw like-minded enthusiasts together in relatively exclusive groups. By contrast, classical music (together with jazz and country) does not generate such excitement, but, especially for elite groups, it provides repertoires and an arena for socialising, while continuing to enjoy public legitimacy. Classical music evokes hierarchy and power: the ghostly memories of legitimate cultural capital. Contemporary musical forms evoke intense attachments and excitements in relation to favourite artists and works. The final section develops these contrasts further by exploring how different audiences use live venues.

5.2 Music as a contested cultural field

Music is the most popular cultural activity that we asked about. Only 2 per cent of households possess no stored or recorded music, and 40 per cent have over 200 CDs (or equivalents). Only 8 per cent of our sample do not know any of the eight works of music that we quizzed them on, compared to 16 per cent who do not

know any of the seven works of art and the 45 per cent who do not know any of the six books. Attendance at musical events is common with half the population attending at least one of the musical events we specified (orchestral concerts, opera, night clubs, rock concerts or musicals). Music is part of the foreground and background of everyday life (Longhurst, 1995; deNora, 2000): as well as playing recorded music, people listen to it on the radio, and as a background to watching television and film. These findings set music apart from reading and the visual arts, which are much less popular. Two-thirds of our respondents read less than ten books a year for pleasure, and most people do not visit art galleries.

Yet music is also different from other popular activities, notably television viewing, because of long-term and deep tension between its consecrated and popular forms. Classical music, in its associations with the court, became central to the European cultural heritage, and was seen as carrying intrinsic virtues. It is this tradition Bourdieu had in mind when noting that 'music represents the most radical and most absolute form of the negation of the world, and especially the social world, which the bourgeois ethos tends to demand of all forms of art' (Bourdieu, 1984: 19). Bourdieu saw music's reliance on form over content as making it amenable to definition in terms of the Kantian aesthetic, which celebrates the distance of culture from daily life, so that it becomes the central defining feature of cultural capital itself. Bourdieu also identified how classical music opposed itself to the immediate appeal of popular music, which has an even longer history than the classical tradition. In the decades since *Distinction* was written, the proliferation of recorded music has accentuated the role of music as central to many kinds of popular subcultures, especially for the relatively disadvantaged, youth groups and ethnic minorities (for the case of rap, see Krims, 2000).

Given this dramatic transformation of the music industry, it is notable that since the early 1990s sociologists have also used data specifically on musical taste to detect a breaking down of this opposition between high and low culture. It is by using cross-sectional survey data on people's preferences for musical genres in the United States (US) that Richard Peterson and his associates have claimed that increasing numbers of Americans are becoming 'cultural omnivores' (Peterson and Kern, 1996, and see the discussion in Chapter 1). Rather than having fixed preferences for specific genres of either classical or popular music, they range across musical forms, listening to an increasing variety of music. Peterson and Kern's claims chime with widely held arguments about the rise of postmodern, consumerist, culture where people increasingly sample from a range of cultural forms. The formation of the radio station Classic FM, which presents 'snippets' of classical music in accessible form, so ending BBC Radio 3's 'highbrow' monopoly over classical music, is a well-cited example of these changing boundaries. This 'mix-and-match' culture has been further strengthened by the use of digital technology, which allows listeners to assemble and customise their playlists in ways that were not possible using vinyl or even compact disc technology.

Although Peterson's arguments about the rise of the cultural omnivore are widely accepted in broad terms, some important caveats have been raised that

need further discussion. First, it has been argued that, although some people might appreciate different genres of music, there are boundaries to their range, certain musical thresholds over which few cross. In the case of the US, heavy metal is avoided by all but 'hard-core' fans (Bryson, 1996). We may simply be seeing the reworking of 'highbrow' culture, possibly to include a wider range of genres (including jazz and rock, for instance), yet still polarized against other kinds of music that are stigmatized and seen as minority taste only.

A second caveat is methodological. Many quantitative studies use only a few indicators of musical tastes. A good example is the important account of musical preferences in the UK from Tak Wing Chan and John Goldthorpe (2006), who have reanalysed Arts Council England surveys conducted in 2001, which distinguish between those who do or do not attend four types of musical event (opera, jazz, rock concerts and classical concerts) and who do or do not listen to recordings of these genres. On the bases of a latent class analysis of these eight variables, Chan and Goldthorpe find evidence for a division between a large group of 'univores' attracted to rock, and two smaller groups of 'omnivores' attracted to classical music, jazz and opera. This account is necessarily restricted by the limited indicators they are able to draw on. And indeed, their 'omnivores' are composed of those who appreciate opera, classical music and jazz, which might be regarded as being cognate musical forms – an issue which we address below.

A third caveat is that much of the available data remains focused on 'high culture' rather than more popular musical forms. This was certainly true of Bourdieu's own analysis of music, which centred on differences within the broad field of classical music: Strauss's *Blue Danube* is popular among the working class, whilst the *Well-Tempered Clavier* is favoured by intellectuals (Bourdieu, 1984: 17), yet both are part of the classical music canon. This general bias remains true for the studies of Sintas and Alvarez (2002), and DiMaggio and Mukhtar (2002), as well as Chan and Goldthorpe (2006). There is a wider methodological issue here. Those who study popular music generally use qualitative and ethnographic approaches (e.g. Martin, 1995; Cohen, 2007; Longhurst, 2000) often strongly informed by cultural studies, whilst those who study classical music are more likely to use quantitative data, focused historical studies and more 'orthodox' social theory. We badly need to bridge this divide if we are to understand the relationships between musical tastes more comprehensively. Because our survey data ask about an unusually fine-grained number of 'popular' musical genres – rock, heavy metal, country and western, urban (including hip hop and R&B), world, and electronic – and because it uses a Likert scale, which allows devotees and critics of various hues to be delineated, and because our study also includes qualitative data, we are able to address these problems.

A fourth caveat is the use of genre as the focus for study. Most research identifies tastes for musical genres (e.g. classical music, country and western, heavy metal). As we show below, this is important, yet the nature of genre boundaries needs to be subject to analysis. This point lies at the heart of Douglas Holt's (1998) resonant critique of research on cultural taste. He argued that it is necessary not just to ask

about genres of music, but about specific works and practices of consumption, since we need to know exactly which ones, or which combinations, serve as markers of taste *vis-à-vis* others. We cannot be sure that respondents have similar understandings of what music is entailed in particular genres, and we probably don't know if people who don't like genres genuinely don't like them, or have not heard them. For example, in-depth interviews collected in Savage, Bagnall and Longhurst (2005) revealed the popularity amongst middle-class groups of 'light classical' music, a hybrid genre category, which does not appear in official surveys, but was spontaneously mentioned by numerous respondents. This repudiates 'difficult' *avant-garde* forms in favour of 'easy listening' kinds of classical music: Mozart or Vivaldi rather than Schoenberg or Stravinsky.

Antoine Hennion (2001) has developed this point by emphasising that genres are constructed through performances involving a range of human, institutional and technical agencies, so emphasising the fluidity and complexity of genre labels that may not always map easily on to official genre categories. This point is especially important because digitalisation of musical forms accentuates the possibilities of mobilising around different devices for recording, storing and playing music. The categorising of musical genres, both by people as they engage musically, and by social scientists themselves, is therefore an exercise in classification which itself needs to be critically unravelled, rather than treated simply as a neutral pre-condition for study.

5.3 Contours of musical taste

Table 5.1 reports people's liking for the eight genres we asked about. Unlike most previous studies, these were chosen to allow considerable representation from more popular musical forms, so that we included world music, electronic, heavy metal and urban, as well as rock.

Table 5.1 Liking/disliking of musical genres (percentages by row)

<i>Genre</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>Have not heard of</i>	<i>n</i>
Rock	15	12	13	10	9	9	29	4	1561
Modern jazz	5	7	14	12	13	16	32	1	1563
World music	6	7	10	13	14	14	34	3	1562
Classical, incl.opera	16	13	13	14	10	11	23	0	1563
Country and western	13	13	13	14	12	12	24	1	1562
Electronic	6	6	8	7	9	13	45	7	1557
Heavy metal	4	7	6	7	7	12	55	3	1563
Urban, incl. hip hop, R&B	10	9	11	11	11	12	31	5	1559

Notes
(a) Liking of musical genres on a scale where 1 = like it very much indeed and 7 = do not like it at all.
(b) Don't knows are excluded from total numbers.

The questions asked respondents to rank musical genres from 1 (like very much indeed) to 7 (do not like at all), allowing us to differentiate real enthusiasts from moderate fans, those who mildly dislike from those who detest a given musical genre. The most arresting finding from Table 5.1 is that the category of '7', indicating extreme dislike, is the most common single response for every genre. People tend not to give neutral or ambivalent responses about music they do not like, but react strongly against it. This is hardly *prima facie* evidence to support the omnivore thesis, but rather indicates a degree of cultural antagonism between enthusiasts and detractors of musical forms. This point can be underlined when one notes that for rock and for classical music, the second most common response after '7' is '1'. Apparently devoted fans stand opposed to severe critics. Only for classical and for country and western music do the middle-ranging responses, between 3–5, accumulate more responses than either the very positive (1–2) or very negative (6–7) ones.

There is also an interesting inversion in the aggregate popularity of high and popular music. Classical music, usually identified as the most 'highbrow' musical form, and one might assume the minority taste of the intellectual middle class, is actually the single most popular musical genre, with 16 per cent liking it a lot, and 42 per cent giving it a positive evaluation (1–3). By contrast, more 'popular' forms of music are actually much less liked across the board. Urban, world, jazz, electronic music and heavy metal all see high negative ratings. Seventy-four per cent do not like heavy metal (rankings 5–7), 67 per cent don't like electronic, 59 per cent don't like world and 54 per cent don't like urban.

Table 5.2 indicates whether respondents know about, and like, eight musical works chosen to exemplify different musical genres and periods of composition, from musical artists of varied ethnicities, nations and gender. Whereas even the most popular genres of music failed to get more than 43 per cent of the sample endorsing them, Table 5.2 shows that some specific works of music

Table 5.2 Knowledge of and taste for musical works (percentages by row)

<i>Musical work</i>	<i>Listened and liked</i>	<i>Listened, don't like</i>	<i>Not listened, have heard of</i>	<i>Have not heard of</i>	<i>n</i>
<i>Wonderwall</i> , Oasis	47	14	13	27	1560
<i>Stan</i> , Eminem	31	18	16	35	1563
<i>Four Seasons</i> , Vivaldi	56	6	18	21	1562
<i>Einstein on Beach</i> , Glass	3	3	11	84	1563
<i>Symphony no. 5</i> , Mahler	19	6	21	53	1560
<i>Kind of Blue</i> , Miles Davis	13	3	14	69	1561
<i>Oops, I Did It Again</i> , Britney Spears	26	39	12	22	1560
<i>Chicago</i> , Sinatra	65	17	10	8	1560

Notes

- (a) Percentages may not add up to 100 because of rounding.
 (b) Don't knows are excluded from total numbers.

command much more appeal. Nearly two-thirds like Frank Sinatra's *Chicago*, well over half like Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*, and nearly half like Oasis's *Wonderwall*. By contrast, the other musical works are much less popular, but in all cases except for Britney Spears, *Oops I Did It Again*, this is not because they are disliked, but because respondents have not heard of them (or at least, cannot remember hearing of them), and hence don't feel able to say whether they like them or not. It is not surprising that 84 per cent have not heard of Philip Glass's *Einstein on the Beach*, but, remarkably perhaps, over two-thirds of respondents have not heard of Miles Davis's *Kind of Blue*, despite its canonical status in jazz history. Our chosen musical works are either widely known, or little known. Some are in such widespread currency that large numbers know – and like – them. These range across classical (Vivaldi), popular (Sinatra) and contemporary (Oasis) genres. Those that are very much of minority interest and taste also range across classical, traditional and contemporary forms.

Chapter 3 showed that musical tastes are powerfully differentiated on three out of the four axes of our cultural maps. We can more systematically assess how musical tastes are related to each other by conducting a cluster analysis of respondents according to their liking for musical genres, using the full seven-scale range of the Likert scales, allowing an unprecedented unravelling of the differentiation of the musical field (see Table 5.3). Each cluster shows a score for each of the eight genres, so that we can identify whether those in particular clusters are omnivorous (liking more than one genre, and if so, what kind) and also whether particular tastes (high scores) for certain genres are associated with

Table 5.3 Cluster analysis of musical taste

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Rock	2.03	5.08	5.89	4.70	1.88	2.46	6.16	2.41
Jazz	2.08	4.25	3.12	3.84	1.77	4.51	3.03	2.26
World	1.50	3.16	4.11	4.52	3.68	3.02	2.72	1.83
Classical	5.96	3.00	2.94	5.06	1.66	6.07	4.03	1.70
Country	5.06	2.27	2.60	5.74	2.04	2.39	3.03	4.15
Electronic	1.31	2.49	5.80	2.79	3.69	1.70	1.65	1.49
Heavy metal	1.22	1.70	4.41	2.80	1.41	1.40	5.06	1.20
Urban	1.41	5.26	5.14	3.90	5.77	2.07	2.75	1.56
% in cluster	16	11	13	12	11	10	13	15
% prof.	16	16	12	11	5	14	18	5
% female	16	12	10	13	14	11	9	16
% 18–24	0	11	18	4	42	2	18	4
% 25–44	3	18	20	10	13	8	16	12
% 45–64	22	5	6	20	4	12	14	17
% 65+	52	2	0	6	0	14	1	25
% black	11	7	12	17	32	11	1	9
% graduate	12	12	15	16	7	15	19	4
<i>n</i>	215	146	170	167	149	130	181	200

Note: Cluster scores range from a low of 1 (don't like at all) to high of 7 (like very much indeed) with 4 representing neutrality (neither like nor dislike).

distastes (low scores) for others.¹ We can also distinguish strong liking and disliking from more moderate tastes by differentiating between the lowest possible score of 1 and the highest possible of 7. Table 5.3 also reports the proportion of women, respondents from different age groups, graduates and professionals located in each cluster, so that we can assess whether the clusters are associated with certain kinds of social group.

Perhaps the most arresting finding is that only two of the eight clusters (3 and 4, comprising 24 per cent of the respondents) are omnivorous to the extent that at least half of the eight genres are liked (entailing here a score of 4 and over). Even these most omnivorous groups are marked by clear dislikes for certain musical genres. Cluster 3 brings together those who are very keen on rock, electronic and world, and have a moderate liking for heavy metal and world, but dislike country and classical. Cluster 4 brings together those who like country, classical, rock and world, but who intensely dislike electronic, urban and world music. A further two clusters are composed of enthusiasts for one genre only. Cluster 5 (11 per cent) isolates those who only like urban music, and cluster 8 (15 per cent) scores country and western above the median point. This last cluster might best be understood as the only one which shows no strong liking for any musical genre, since the country and western score (4.15 per cent) hardly surpasses the middle ranking of 4.

The other four clusters comprise respondents whose tastes for a minority of genres are also linked to marked dislikes for other genres: liking classic and country and avidly disliking heavy metal, electronic, urban and world (cluster 1, 16 per cent); liking urban, rock and (slightly) jazz and disliking heavy metal and to a lesser extent country and electronic (cluster 2, 11 per cent); liking classic and (slightly) jazz and strongly disliking heavy metal, electronic, rock and country (cluster 6, 10 per cent), and liking rock and heavy metal and keenly disliking electronic, world and urban music (cluster 7, 13 per cent).

This complex structuring of likes and dislikes allows us to move beyond a simple contrast between univore and omnivore tastes. First, in line with Bryson's (1996) arguments, most clusters (other than 4) are marked by more extreme low scores than high scores, suggesting that dislikes are highly symbolic. Also, as Bryson indicates, heavy metal is the most common negative reference point here, being singled out with the lowest score in no less than five clusters, and it is closely followed by electronic (with four scores of under 2). Country and western is the only genre which does not attract a very low negative score (less than 2) from at least one cluster, confirming that it is less defined than the other genres.

Second, despite the aggregate popularity of classical music, only one cluster genuinely straddles it with links to popular music, cluster 4, which includes a liking for country and western, classical, rock and world music, and where even heavy metal scores almost indifferently. In short, we have evidence for large amounts of 'short-range' omnivorousness linking musical genres which might be deemed relatively close to each other, but also a clear indication of a powerful divide between popular and classical music enthusiasts, which is only crossed in one cluster.

Third, looking at the demographic correlates of the clusters, we can see that the most omnivorous clusters do not appear to be especially composed of the well-educated middle classes, as Peterson and Kern (1996), Bryson (1996) and Chan and Goldthorpe (2007b) suggest. The most 'transgressive' cluster (4) – the only one that spans classical and popular – has a roughly proportionate share of professionals and only a slight over-representation of graduates. This is a cluster populated by those aged between 45 and 64 (55 per cent of this cluster is comprised of members of this age group). In the other wide-ranging omnivorous cluster (3), 25–44-year-olds are over-represented, but characteristics of class and education do not discriminate.

The importance of age for structuring cluster membership is underscored when we see that the youngest age group (18–24) is massively over-represented amongst the urban enthusiast cluster 5. This is also the cluster that sees great over-representation of black respondents. By contrast those over 65 are dramatically over-represented in cluster 1 (classical and country and western) and to a lesser extent cluster 6 (classical and jazz). Put in these terms, we further see the power of an age-related cultural divide where popular music appeals to the young and classical music appeals to the old, in which only the middle-aged, first exposed to music in the 1950s and 1960s, when popular music first challenged classical music's cultural visibility, are somewhat likely to appreciate both of these forms. As we would expect from Chapter 3, none of the other socio-demographic variables map on to these clusters in such a crisp way. Musical boundaries are closely associated with those of age, such that we might well talk about generations with different kinds of omnivorousness.

5.4 The intensities of musical taste

We can now explore how this clearly divided set of musical tastes is articulated by our respondents. The ways in which they talk about music show that our survey data only scratches the surface of the kinds of genre labels that were routinely deployed spontaneously during conversation. Fifty-six different musical genres were identified by participants in the focus groups. Nearly all of these are variants of contemporary popular music. The few references to forms of classical music are 'light classical' (from the Pakistani middle class) and 'classical Asian' (Pakistani working class). It is possible that the references to Welsh choral music (from the Welsh skilled manual workers) or Irish folk (from the Welsh manual supervisors) might also be associated with this family. But there are no elaborated references to different types of classical music, such as baroque, romantic, choral or atonal. This is very different to the multiple references to contemporary music, sometimes evoked at a remarkably fine-grained level, for instance, ranging from 'hard house' through 'trash metal', 'heavy white rock', 'techno trance' and 'chilled out'.

This important contrast does not mean that classical music is unimportant in the focus groups. References to classical music are made in 10 out of the 25 focus groups, more than for any other of our named musical genres, although

on two of these occasions the term 'classical' is introduced by the moderator. Leaving these two cases aside, the social range of the groups that spontaneously talk about classical music is considerable, stretching from business elites, landowners, through women professionals, young professionals, the Indian working class, agricultural workers, manual supervisors and the Pakistani working class. Yet once we examine how the term classical is used, we see greater complexity. The only specific composers identified in the discussions are Vivaldi, Bach and Mozart. Most of the minority ethnic groups use the label 'classical' to mean 'classic' versions of their own national or ethnic music, seen in contrast to new forms, such as Bhangra or fusion, rather than with reference to the Western tradition (see further, Savage, 2006). Some white focus groups do the same. Wyn, in the skilled manual workers group, notes his interest in 'older ones, like Acker Bilk, *Strangers on the Shore*, that's still classical music isn't it?', though others in his group preferred more stringent criteria. It is this ambiguity about the boundary between *classic* and *classical* that explains why minority ethnic groups respondents seem to be disproportionately predisposed to 'classical' music.

For white respondents, classical music remains attuned to class. For the working class, it evokes a kind of complex agonistic response. When the supervisors of manual workers in South Wales are asked whether they like classical music, Dai says he likes Vivaldi, but immediately distances himself from this by adding 'I heard something on the radio and they said it was by him'. He returns to this issue later, emphasising his distance from classical music: 'the classical music I've heard ... I wouldn't know who the composers are or whatever, but you become exposed to it and you think "that's a nice piece of music" and I'll listen to it. But I wouldn't have a clue as to who the artist was or whatever'. Later on, Dewi interjects that classical is a 'mature' taste and Glyn that it is for 'intellectuals'. (Dewi's interpretation is, of course, entirely supported by our analysis). Other members of the group resist this claim that classical music is for 'other people', though tellingly they do this by praising its 'easy listening' qualities, so positioning classical music as a form of accessible music, not esoteric or demanding. This kind of hostility to the pretensions of classical music, which leads to a concern to reclaim it as ordinary, is similarly found amongst the unskilled workers, also tellingly located in Wales, whose strategy to domesticate it involve subverting its claims to be esoteric:

Spud: I love classical.

Tom: He's taking the piss. [General laughter]

Moderator: Nobody you particularly like Spud?

Spud [pause]

Bif: He doesn't know a bloody name of a classical, that's what's wrong with him! [General laughter] But I am into it a bit. You wouldn't believe how much it gets the women going.

Tom: The what going?

Bif: The women going.

Moderator: But that's not perhaps the only reason you're into it ...

Den: You lying bastard.

Bif: No, not at all.

Exchanges such as these testify to the ability of classical music to carry loaded signifiers to the working classes, leading to a response which is much more complex than a straight rejection or distaste for it. Its pretensions to cultural superiority can be questioned by defining it as easy listening or as music 'to get the women going', yet there is also a concern to emphasise that it is not really 'their' music through claims that they don't know much about it. Here it is worth returning to our survey data, which shows that classical music remains a disproportionately middle-class taste: graduates are six times more likely to appreciate it than those who have no qualifications (Savage, 2006). Such is the cultural pervasiveness and legitimacy of classical music for the white working classes that it cannot readily be ignored. To oppose it runs the risk of being interpreted as a sign of inferiority, so we find instead a more subtle, fluid, concern to position oneself as 'knowing', able to subvert dominant meanings and find alternative modes of grounding musical taste.

No working-class interviewees show significant knowledge of, or participation in, classical music. By contrast, amongst our elite interviewees, all bar two say that they like classical music (and one of these proved to be an opera buff). Six out of the 11 elite members show a knowledgeable awareness of the classical music canon, with some displaying great knowledge and interest even in twentieth-century composers such as Britten, Copeland and Stravinsky. Although several also like rock music, the singers they refer to predominantly dated to the 1960s and 1970s and showed little sign of being linked to current musical trends (Bob Dylan, the Beatles, Eric Clapton, Fleetwood Mac and Queen being favoured). They seem to exemplify the middle-aged generation that we saw from our cluster analysis was the only group to straddle the rock/classical divide.

Although professionals are considerably over-represented in both enjoying classical music and attending classical music events, our qualitative interviews detect a relatively passive form of appropriation. Only seven of our 44 interviewees evince enthusiasm for classical music, to the extent of identifying specific composers (as with Maria, Janet or Sally-Ann), or talking about their consumption of classical music (such as James, a keen Radio 3 follower, or Dougie, who attends classical concerts). These individuals are all located on the right hand side of Figure 4.1, as we would expect. Maria's enthusiasm for classical music is shared with a taste for contemporary music: she is the only example of an 'omnivore' who has intense likes for both classical and contemporary music amongst our interviewees. She had learned the piano to grade 6, and 'loves' Debussy, Chopin and Rachmaninov. But she also likes jazz, and 'extreme rock music, it's just great, full of energy'. She then goes on to describe herself as someone who likes 'extremes', thus identifying herself as someone who is fully aware of the cultural boundaries she is crossing in her unusual tastes. She hates country and western, in part because of its American associations.

Ronald is the only real devotee of classical music (he did not answer the survey, and hence is not placed in Figure 4.1). When asked what his musical interests were, he replies:

Ronald: This is the easiest one, it's classical music, completely that.

Interviewer: Classical music and what is it that you like about that in particular?

Ronald: It just speaks to me really. It's my soul. I should be working in I think, I feel I should be working in classical music ...

Like Maria, Ronald's enthusiasm is related to his skill on the piano (he could also play the clarinet). Unlike Maria, he is clear that classical music provides the canon against which to judge other music. His scorn for country and western and jazz is hence couched in terms of its inability to live up to classical values:

Ronald: Modern jazz doesn't sound as though its got any form or that it's just screeching. Country and western is just so predictable.

Interviewer: In the music you like presumably you don't look for, you look for melody and unpredictability then?

Ronald: Well, there's still structure in classical music, even modern classical music there's structure. And at the same time the more modern you get, there is unpredictability, a bit of Benjamin Britten I expect is the same. But, with country and western for example, it's like a child's poem, it's just a da de da de dum, da de da de dum, that type of thing and the modern jazz, I know it's based on improvisation as most jazz is but modern jazz seems to be as though it's picking out any notes, that'll do, where's the next note. Just personal opinion, there's lots of people who would slate me for those comments.

It is interesting that Ronald's ire is directed against two genres, country and western and jazz, which our cluster analysis shows can be related to tastes for classical music, whereas contemporary music is completely off his radar. It is also interesting that his tastes are linked to his unusually aesthetic orientation to film and reading. His partner, Euan, although happy to listen to some classical music, sees Ronald as extreme in his musical taste, noting that he encourages him to wear headphones around the house, and that 'some of his music really finishes me off sometimes'.

Both Ronald and Maria may appear superficially rather like our elite interviewees in their interest in classical music, but are nonetheless rather different from them. Whereas the elites talk about their enthusiasm for classical music predominantly in easy and assured terms, as suitable for 'someone like them', both Maria and Ronald see their affiliation as more agonistic, related to their identities as 'liking extremes' (in the case of Maria), or in Ronald's case as music that 'speaks to his soul'. All the other (non-elite) interviewees have more 'measured' and respectful orientations to classical music. Some judged it in terms of how it measures up to 'contemporary' standards. The scientist Dougie is one of the more committed

classical music buffs and even attends the opera. Nonetheless, his account is very different from Ronald's:

I also like, as well as that I mean I do quite enjoy classical music as well. A lot of early music I think is really really good, I can see the parallels between the way things are played and the sort of skills of these guys and related to modern day people as well and I think just, it's just amazing, people don't really listen to a lot of early music but if they did listen to it, I think it would really be, they'd be quite surprised at how good it was. Just because it's really, really old doesn't mean to say it's not good. So I do like classical music, I wouldn't say I know an awful lot about classical music but it's the sort of thing, because when you hear it you think oh, that's really good.

What is striking here is how classical music is seen not as part of a historical canon, but as potentially as good as contemporary music. The same refrain is made by Ian who speaks of his affection for classical music in this way:

It's very relaxing music and it's, I know it sounds daft to say, it was written a couple of hundred years ago and you think how could they write music like that two hundred years ago because it's so fabulous and so complicated, but it's an insult to them to say that because of course you've got clever people right the way through time. But again to think that somebody was capable of writing something like that ...

This way of judging music in terms of whether it lives up to contemporary standards explains why so much classical music is viewed as 'soothing', since this is the kind of role it is allowed within such a frame. Classical music exists 'in the background' for the more advantaged groups. It provides familiar repertoires and references, but it is not identified as music to get excited about. To this extent, the cultural power of classical music appears to be waning amongst many middle-class groups, especially those who are younger, even though the elite remain highly vested in it.

This account of classical music as 'relaxing' is the most common way in which our interviewees discuss its appeal. Poppy notes that 'it right calmed me' and later that 'it's more or less relaxing, soothing', Frank that 'it's relaxing sort of music', and Cherie that 'it is generally much more soothing'. Even those who appear more involved in classical music evoke it in this passive way. Gerry openly claims a liking for both classical and rock music:

Interviewer: Are there any particular rock musicians you like?

Gerry: [...] I'm not into any particular favourites any more as such. Obviously when I was a bit younger, it was U2, things like that but I'll go out and just – the one at the moment is, the band I like at the moment is Keane. They're very good. My youngest son came and he brought one band called The Zutons, Who Killed the Zutons,

and it's almost like American country and western guitar, guitar-based music, that was interesting, I was quite surprised in that. I liked that. I do like rhythm and blues as well.

Interviewer: And classical music you mentioned....

Gerry: Yeah, again just a mixture, not anyone in particular. Certainly...

Interviewer: Do you listen to classical FM and things?

Gerry: I was just going to say we have Classic FM occasionally on the old satellite as such, just easy listening classical music.

Interviewer: Would you ever go out to hear music live?

Gerry: We do tend to go out and listen, we have quite a lot of blues festivals here during the year. One at Easter time and one at the back end, August Bank Holiday, we always go out for that.

What is interesting here are the different evocations of rock and classical. Discussing Gerry's taste in rock opens up named bands, associated with family experiences. Classical music is evoked in a more general and vacuous way, only ultimately focused in highly generic terms as 'just easy listening classical music'. Claiming affiliation with classical music demonstrates respectability, but rock demonstrates involvement, excitement and commitment. Gerry's wife, Janet, also shows interest in classical music, to the extent that she identifies some specific composers, Tchaikovsky, Dvorak and Mozart. However, she then distances herself from the 'hard' classical:

I have a four CD called *Reflections* which is Mozart, it's like a choice of all the classical music and yes, I do, I like listening to classical, only because it chills me out. That and Michael Ball. I like opera but not the hard opera, I mean somebody with a really good voice, ... got a beautiful voice it makes all the hairs stand up on me.

The majority of focus group members show much more intense interest in current musical forms, and prefer to use more specific labels than 'rock' in describing their musical interests. Whereas there was a tendency to domesticate classical music by emphasising its 'easy listening' qualities, contemporary music is made more exotic by appending more specific labels and identifiers, ones which position the speaker as an expert and aficionado. Therefore, although the universal meaning of 'rock' as a generic term for contemporary, predominantly guitar-based music is understood, and broadly endorsed, focus group members only get excited when they claim allegiance to more focused forms of rock, such as heavy metal, Indie rock, R&B, punk and folk. Matthew, a member of the benefits claimants' focus group, thus says:

... it is very important to me, I was thinking on the way down how would I describe, how would I describe what sort of genre I like, I don't, it's more easy to describe what I don't like I suppose, and I don't like the commercial stuff in the charts now, and I don't like country and western and things

like that. ... alternative or Indie stuff like that, it's important to me, I think if I had to do without music or TV I'd do without TV.

The importance of this refrain around specific rock genres is how it particularises and identifies enthusiasms and intensities around highly specific named categories, which lead to contestation, dispute and excitement. Here is an example which comes from the women's professional focus group:

- Alison:* Because I actually ... detest R&B.
- Moderator:* You detest R&B, why?
- Alison:* Just don't like it, it's personal taste, I really don't like it.
- Moderator:* Do you know why you don't like it, do you think it's silly and whiney?
- Alison:* Just the noise that they make, it's horrible! Craig David, all of them, just awful, all of them.
- Jo:* That's not really R&B though, sorry.
- Alison:* Oh come on, what do you mean it's not R&B?
- Jo:* Macy Gray though ...
- Moderator:* Macy Gray is
- Alison:* I know what you mean.
- Jo:* I think there probably is some good stuff but because I've sort of – anything that has those kind of –
- Moderator:* Do you think it's just too 'poppy', is that why, because you said earlier, sad though I am to admit it, some of my friends only dance to pop.
- Jo:* No, I love dancing to pop music, I think there's nothing better than ...
- Alison:* Abba!
- Jo:* Oh no, I can't stand Abba!

What is interesting about this exchange is the highly charged placing of artists in specific categories, with debate proceeding through clarifying boundaries and sub-boundaries. It is precisely this process which explains why so many genres are spontaneously generated in some of the focus groups. The lesbians identify no less than 22 genres, including debates on the rival merits of jungle, hardhead, trash metal, heavy white rock, techno trance, folk, calypso, Brit/Asian fusion and house. Similarly, the young professionals talk about trance, dub, chilled out and Indie. There appears to be a class-related divide, with the more educated focus groups identifying a greater range of genres within contemporary music. The unskilled workers, by contrast, have an intense discussion, but one which focuses solely on the rival merits of rap and rave. Some of the 'educated' white focus groups, as well as minority ethnic groups, talk about musical forms associated with minority ethnic groups as part of this proliferation, with positive mentions of Bhangra (Indian working class, Pakistani working class), hip hop (Indian working class, business elites, Pakistani working class), rap (Indian middle class, women professionals, business elites,

unskilled workers) and reggae (lesbians, black working class, Indian working class, professionals). As we see here, there is considerable hybridity whereby musical forms associated with specific ethnic groups attract interest from other ethnicities, including the young white groups, and jostle with a wide array of musical forms.

Contemporary music thus works as an intense cultural space, which proliferates categories and spans ethnicities in a way that classical music does not. This orientation might be seen as omnivorous in generating a liking for multiple categories of music, yet such genres are quite close to each other in cultural space. Only Maria debates the rival qualities of classical music versus rock. The salient and meaningful comparisons are between closely related genres, including those which spin off each other.

There is an interesting difference between minority ethnic groups and the white focus groups. The minority ethnic groups often identify 'classic' or 'traditional' musical forms, and then more recent spin offs, and see these as relating to each other. They apparently need to settle accounts with traditional ethnic musical forms in the context of genuine contestation about the relationship between newer hybrid forms of music and older 'classical' work (see further, the discussion of Surbhitra in Chapter 13). This active contrast between 'tradition' and 'modern', classical and popular, does not exist for the white groups, where classical music is defined passively, as neither culturally engaging nor personally relevant. The contemporary family is the productive and energising component of the musical field, the one which generates position-taking strategies. In this respect, we have unravelled a very different picture to that analysed by Bourdieu in *Distinction*, where classical music is key to organising position-taking strategies in the field.

5.5 Music and performance

The two musical families we have explored are separated not only through taste, but also through forms of participation. Only seven of our 44 interviewees talk about their interests in playing musical instruments. These are certainly more musically engaged than others in the sample, and two of them, Maria and Ronald, are highly vested in classical music. Attending musical events is more common. Here, again, we see the polarised nature of attendance: 5 per cent go to the opera once a year or more, 10 per cent to rock concerts and 12 per cent to orchestral concerts, yet only four people from our survey (0.3 per cent) had been to both opera and a rock concert, and only 11 (0.7 per cent) to both an orchestral concert and a rock concert. It is the professionals who are predisposed to attend both kinds of event (especially classical), yet evidently it is different professional individuals who are drawn to one or the other.

It is interesting that almost all our elite members go to orchestral concerts and, more significantly, everyone had at some stage of their lives been a regular visitor to the opera and, for some, this was a continuing involvement. In a couple of cases it had become less feasible because of living in the country. For another two, no longer attending was something of a blessing as they confessed to not

liking opera very much and had done so mainly out of a sense of professional and social obligation. Timothy, a senior civil servant, is one such, observing that 'it would be fair comment to say that a lot of senior civil servants meet each other at the opera and the ballet'. Cynthia, a politician and a member of national regulatory bodies and commissions, reports that in the 1960s and 1970s, living in metropolitan political circles, exchange of invitations to the opera was a key form of sociability that resulted in very frequent visits. No doubt, it plays a central role in the organisation and connections of this group (see further, Warde and Bennett, 2008). By contrast, none of the household interviewees identify a memorable 'classical' music event, which is consistent with our stress on its background role. Listening to music on the radio is much more emphasised.

Members of our focus groups and household interviews are much more likely to attend live events as a way of claiming and demonstrating affiliation with contemporary music. The auratic event could be identified in various different ways. In some cases, especially amongst the older focus groups, it depends on focusing on a once-only, never-to-be-repeated event, where the concert brings them uniquely together with a 'star'. The members of the benefit claimant focus group from Northern Ireland reminisce as follows:

Edna: I used to go a lot, when I was young, I used to, all the dance halls and then all the music got live and I've seen The Move and I've seen Dave, Dee, Dozey, Beaky Mick and Titch, and I've seen the ...

Ruth: They all came to Belfast.

Joey: Oh, they all come to Belfast.

Joey: I remember when Dave Dee Dozey, Beaky, Micky and Titch came to ...

Edna: Yeah, and I spoke to Chip Hawkes and the Tremeloes 'cos he asked me for directions! And – yeah, his son.

Amongst some of the working-class groups, the quintessential auratic event is identified with a going to see a 'classic' rock band in a large venue. The high cost of these events can, in a sense, add to their special qualities, marked by being much more expensive than might normally be afforded. The following example is from the manual supervisors focus group:

Rhian: I'm going to a pop concert in August. In the Millennium Stadium. I went up last year and it was brilliant. Like you said, the atmosphere, it was electric. There's all sorts of bands playing but you go for the atmosphere as much as anything.

Glyn: Yes, it's outstanding, the atmosphere.

Moderator: What do you go and see then?

Glyn: It varies. I go whenever I can. If Meatloaf was in the area I'd go and see Meatloaf. Or if it was Robbie Williams, Okay, I'm not in my 20s but I'd go and give him a go. My daughters say about Robbie Williams and say, 'You'd enjoy him Dad'. So I'd go.

The middle-class groups tend to reject the big, 'iconic' venue in favour of the more discriminating, 'intimate' venue. This attitude is evident in Rani's statement in the lesbian focus group:

Because the venue's really critical. I was thinking, I went to see something two weeks ago because I knew it was a small venue and it was deliberate. I won't go to ... an awful big concert . It's Ronnie Scott's. I know some of it's old. It's something like The Bull in Brent which you can get some really great music. The venue's small so I like it.

A version of this concern with the 'auratic' venue also surfaces amongst those who attend festivals, where the experience of being in cramped, muddy and generally dirty surroundings is its appeal (as, for instance, amongst the skilled manual workers). A further version of this claim to distinction comes from those who follow favourite bands to exotic locations, such as the young professional Helen, whose devotion to the Counting Crows is marked out by her globe-trotting. She listens to them:

Normally on the way to work 'cos it takes an hour and a half to get to work sometimes on the bus so – and in the evenings, during work if I've got reports to write I probably will, and I will go and see them whenever. I've seen them in Australia, I've seen them in London twice this year and in Australia this year, London last year, and then this year in Paris and Ireland the week after next, twice in America and in August, Australia ...

However, we should not overemphasise the significance of the live venue amongst the devotees of the 'contemporary' family. Focus group members also talk about how they value using different media to listen to music, and indeed digital communication is often seen as a vital aspect, especially for the more educated and younger focus groups. Ranging across musical devices becomes a means of marking out one's own relationship to music. We see this evocation of the importance of the media by Rob, from the young professional focus group, who associates musical genres with their mode of transmission.

I tend to listen to classical music when I'm working, I never used to be able to listen to anything when I was working, I just had to have silence and what I'm doing now I need a bit of distraction so I tend to just listen to the Internet. I listen to quite a lot more, but the music's sort of taken the place of the reading so when I get home and get to bed, I don't have anything to read but I'll just, like last night, I listened to a CD till I fall asleep sort of thing but nothing, no particular band or anything. Dave mentioned the CD library before and I've joined that, just pick a CD for a week or so and try a few things out, as opposed to buying them copy them.

5.6 Conclusion

Notwithstanding all the arguments which have been made for the rise of the musical omnivore, our data firmly indicate the need for a nuanced understanding of the term. Certainly, many people range across genres, but we have shown that there are key boundaries that are much more rarely crossed. This is true for the relatively stigmatised musical forms of heavy metal and country, but it is also true of the boundary between the popular forms of classical and contemporary music. Only 6 per cent of people like both of these. To a large extent, there are different social constituencies attached to these two groups. The elites from our sample are clearly steeped in classical music, and stand in direct opposition to our working-class interviewees. Even where there is evidence of tastes ranging across these two families, the relationship is not one of equivalence. Classical music tends to be passive, background music, whilst contemporary music is the more positive and active choice. The musical field is indeed, therefore, one of contested positions, in which there is no clear neutral ground.

The implications of this relationship for understanding music's role for the organisation of cultural capital are complex. In general, the intensities of contemporary music are affiliated to their role as 'subcultural capital' in Thornton's (1995) terms. It allows enthusiasts to position themselves as up-to-date devotees specifically within the musical field, but there is little evidence that their interests and expertise straddle other social worlds. By contrast, the elite members who enjoy classical music clearly do use their musical interests to make connections to other worlds, notably in the social capital that is both accumulated and spent by attending the opera. We have here an example of Bourdieu's distinction between the autonomous and heteronomous positions with the field, with the former being defined by contemporary music, where virtue is seen as intrinsic to music, and the latter being affiliated with classical music, where interest is linked to a broader embrace of respectable socialising, being well educated and such like.

Bourdieu operated with a notion of the musical field where traditional and *avant-garde* positions were staked out through their reference to the European classical tradition. The dynamics of musical appreciation works now in a different way. Today classical music does not operate as this kind of intense space. It does not convey the active musical stakes consistent with its centrality to position-taking within the musical field. Classical music remains important to elite groups for providing appropriate connections, but for others it acts as a respectable background, which one wants to show some knowledge of, without being strongly invested in. This view of classical music, as a background to relaxation, which does not intrude greatly on contemporary concerns, appears also in our household interviews. The stakes in this field are organised now primarily in terms of musical forms that have existed only since the 1960s.

We can see, then, an important re-positioning of the stakes within the musical field. It is the positions that are drawn out around contemporary popular music that proliferate genres and intensities. This is linked to the hybridisation of ethnic musical forms, the specialisation of music genres and the role of the live event.

The resulting tensions arise along multiple axes: to some extent along lines of class and educational qualifications, but more importantly on the basis of age and ethnicity. We can detect class divisions within age groups, notably in the way that the 'educated' younger groups prove more adept and enthusiastic in both policing and claiming boundaries between genres and subgenres, thereby exhibiting their 'knowingness' about boundary formation; but this is less significant than the age divide that serves to mark out primary relationships to musical clusters.

The implications of the transformation of the musical field for the operation of cultural capital may be profound. As demonstrated by the elite, familiarity with classical music still acts as a form of institutional cultural capital and attendance at classical music events as a form of objective cultural capital, both of which can be converted into social capital. Members of the professional-executive class more widely also show more interest in classical music and are likely to exhibit omnivorous tendencies in relation to music. But they do this with limited enthusiasm, more a matter of passive knowledge, presumably arising from their educational experience, than connoisseurship. Classical music attracts respect and is a symbol of cultivation. Nevertheless, for most of the population, music operates more as subcultural capital, a matter of showing enthusiasm, allegiance and discriminating taste through a relationship to contemporary forms. This involves the exercise of aesthetic judgement, as the interviews and focus groups show. However, we have little evidence that the specialist expertise in the various genres of the contemporary family of musical forms is converted into other forms of capital. No doubt it also serves as a form of social capital as people talk to their friends and family about their musical experience, or debate vehemently about the relative merits of particular items of adjacent forms, but it probably gives no general boost to the accumulation of economic capital. Whether this will change with the passage of time if the younger generation of the middle class defines elements of contemporary music as legitimate, or quasi-legitimate, is uncertain. However, they already show at least a different manner of appropriating music, an orientation which distinguishes them from their working-class counterparts, whose tastes are more restricted. Cultural capital is not evenly distributed across the terrain of the musical field.

6 Popular and rare

Exploring the field of reading

6.1 Introduction

Our survey shows that reading books is a relatively unpopular activity. Twenty per cent of the sample had read no books in the 12 months prior to completing the survey, whilst two-thirds had read less than ten books. Only 12 per cent of the sample had read over 40 books in the previous year. Moreover 45 per cent had not read any of the six literary works that we asked about, despite these including works by notable contemporary best-selling or highly-borrowed authors like John Grisham, Catherine Cookson and J. K. Rowling. Such findings appear to fit well with persistent moral panics about the death of the book in the light of the emergence of various less apparently edifying forms of cultural engagement, such as television and film. At the same time, our data also suggest two important corrections to such narratives.

The first is that two books, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* and *Pride and Prejudice*, are amongst the most recognised and widely consumed of any of the named items in our survey. *Pride and Prejudice* had been read by 38 per cent of our sample, the highest proportion of any book, whilst *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* had been heard of by almost the whole sample (some 96 per cent). Of course, there can be little doubt both these titles benefit from various forms of mediation in the establishment of their popularity. The former has been a staple of educational curricula in the UK for many years as well as being adapted for a successful BBC television series in the 1990s. The latter is part of a multi-media film and publishing phenomenon that has made its author one of the UK's richest women. In the case of *Pride and Prejudice*, these forms of popular mediation reflect the emergence of 'high culture' as a form of mass entertainment in ways which inevitably trouble the coherent relations or homologues between cultural fields upon which Bourdieu's model rests (see Collins, 2002). The relative position of both these books suggests that they can act as indicators of the contemporary imagination and as definitively *popular* culture as much as the films of Steven Spielberg, or the songs of Oasis or Britney Spears.

The second is that, when reading newspapers and magazines is added to the more restricted 'field of books' to create a more inclusive 'field of reading', almost the entire sample, some 98 per cent, are involved in some form of reading.

Reading exists in both restricted and popular forms in contemporary Britain. Section 6.3 will outline the general shape of the field of reading as it emerges from our survey. Section 6.4 outlines the different contributions that the reading of newspapers and magazines makes to our understanding of cultural capital in the UK. First, though, we consider the role that the analysis of reading and of the literary field has played in Bourdieu's and subsequent accounts of cultural capital.

6.2 The functions of reading

In its more inclusive conceptualisation, reading emerges from our study as a common activity with a legitimate inflection. There is evidence from both focus groups and household interviews of a belief that reading is a type of cultural engagement that has distinctive qualities stemming from its relationship to formal education. Several members of our qualitative sample stress, even though they are not 'readers' themselves, the importance of reading to their children to cultivate what are widely assumed to be essential skills of literacy, rather than ephemeral and subjective appreciations of the literary – an implicit recognition of the centrality of reading as a means of acquiring cultural capital across fields. Such interpretations of the social and developmental *uses* of reading have resonances with historical accounts of the explicit connections between literacy and social change. The place of reading, for example, in the histories of class relations in Britain in the industrial revolution, and in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries (Vincent, 1981; Rose, 2001), casts correct tastes in reading as implicit in the struggles of an emergent literate population to free themselves from their conceptualisation as an undistinguished 'mass'. The act of reading has been and remains highly loaded.

It is not surprising therefore that literary activity was central to Bourdieu's theoretical schema, and was particularly important to the establishment of the key conceptual triumvirate of habitus, capital and field. The literary field, understood as all those activities and agents involved in the production of literary 'stuff', modelled on the specific context of late-nineteenth-century Paris, came to exemplify the notion of the field more widely within Bourdieu's thought – that is, of a relatively autonomous and distinct form of activity, with fluid connections to the fields of economy and power. Bourdieu's work on the literary field, concentrated in *The Field of Cultural Production* and *The Rules of Art*, is overwhelmingly concerned with processes of literary production (Boschetti, 2006, usefully locates this work in Bourdieu's broader theoretical corpus). The *consumption* of reading matter is a concern of *Distinction*, but one that is more tangential to the thrust of its analysis than other fields, notably of music or the visual arts. Bourdieu's survey asked questions about preferred reading activities by asking respondents to choose three from ten genres. He also included data on 'reading books other than for a job', 'reading *Le Monde*' and 'reading *Le Figaro Littéraire*', derived from a market research survey amongst business men and senior executives, as three of the indicators of cultural practice in different fractions of the dominant class. It is within

this section of his analysis, where he unpicked the different approaches to culture evident between, for example, engineers and school teachers, that the bulk of his explicit focus on reading rests. Alongside this, though, are numerous asides that suggest reading as a synonym for cultural capital, though interestingly these are often related to reading magazines (*Science et Vie*, *Le Culture Observateur*) and newspapers – the former to exemplify the perils of auto-didacticism in revealing illegitimate, that is non-scholarly, forms of knowledge acquisition, and the latter to reveal the relationship between tastes for newspaper reading and political engagement.

Perhaps surprisingly, given its historical importance, tastes in reading have been less central than, for example, music in recent debates about social class and mobility. Although notions of ‘high’ and ‘low’ in literature have, as in other fields, been affected by changes in education and transformations in the publishing industry, reading has been marginal to the development of the thesis of the omnivore. Recent studies of reading in post-Soviet Russia (Zavisca, 2005) and in the Netherlands (van Rees *et al.*, 1999) demonstrate that tastes for reading might well follow similar patterns to tastes for music or art in debates about omnivorousness, reflecting distinctive orientations of the professional middle classes towards reading that perform specific functions in specific contexts of social change, rather than evidence of a democratisation of hierarchy in and of itself. A review of recent research on reading as a social practice in the United States, Europe and Australia by Griswold, McDonnell and Wright (2005) suggests that, alongside the wide participation in everyday reading of newspapers and magazines, the era of ‘mass reading’ of books that characterised the period from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century might be coming to an end, replaced by the emergence of a numerically small but influential ‘reading class’ characterised by voracious participation and high levels of education. This conceptualisation has some resonance with our findings.

The emphasis in most recent accounts of literary taste has been less on its relations to transformations in social class than on its place in relations of gender. Studies of women’s reading have pointed up the extent to which notions of literary hierarchy and value are persistent and implicitly gendered. Romance reading in particular has traditionally been condemned as a diminished, trivial and frivolous form. However, in more recent assessments (Radway, 1984; Fowler, 1991), everyday participation in the reading of romance novels and women’s magazines (Hermes, 1994) is viewed more positively as enabling various narratives of femininity to be revealed, challenged and re-worked in the engagement with the texts, whilst the physical act of reading involves reclamation and refuge for women in the context of competing domestic roles of mother or partner (see also Bennett *et al.*, 2001).

In our analysis, through the inclusion of questions about a wider ‘field of reading’ alongside a more restricted ‘field of books’, we are able to elaborate on the place of reading in relations of cultural capital across the whole population rather than

exclusively within what Bourdieu would term the dominant class. We are also able to consider social class alongside gender and education as factors shaping contemporary tastes for reading. The next section reveals the patterns emerging from our data on book-reading in particular, before considering the everyday forms of reading of newspapers and magazines.

6.3 Book cultures

Whilst reading books is relatively rare and restricted, our questions on tastes for genres did not discriminate between readers and non-readers and, whilst 'not heard of' was an acceptable response to the questions on genre preference, respondents tended to select a response regardless of their degree of participation in book cultures. Readers who, through more intensive participation, can express more nuanced accounts of genre are thus lumped together with respondents who judge the label rather than draw on particular specific knowledge or investment. As previously discussed, genre itself is something of a blunt instrument here. Other studies, including Bourdieu's, include a greater number of more specialist forms. However, the seven genres we asked about – thrillers, who-dunnits and detective stories; science fiction, fantasy and horror; romances; biographies and autobiographies; modern literature; religious books; and self-help books – do allow some patterns of taste to emerge. Our genres were selected to account for a spread of preferences, taking in popular fiction and non-fiction as well as the more amorphous category of modern literature. This echoes Bourdieu's selection of 'novels' as a category separate from 'detective' and 'adventure' stories (Bourdieu, 1984: 119), but also takes account of the centrality of the relations between genre and gender to the organisation of production in the contemporary literary field. The importance of gender was made clear through Radway's work, which focused on the nuanced appreciation of genre both for readers of romance fiction (Radway, 1984) and for producers or intermediaries working in the cultural industries (Radway, 1997). The rise of the self-help book (including mind, body and spirit books) as a non-fiction form with both a popular audience and, according to Giddens (1991), theoretical significance in forms of contemporary identity management, is also reflected in our choice of genres.

The cultural map outlined in Chapter 3 captured responses to questions about the seven genres of books and two questions about frequency of reading and book ownership. Along with tastes for music and visual arts, reading contributes most to the differentiation of contemporary cultural tastes. Its contribution is, however, multifaceted, and can be distinguished on all four axes. On axis 1, which distinguishes levels of participation, reading (exemplified by tastes for biographies and modern literature and the relatively intense ownership and readership of books) is on the 'active' right-hand side and, in the case of modern literature, in close proximity to attendance at museums and art galleries and liking French restaurants. On axes 2 and 3, which measure, respectively, the relationships between 'established and emergent tastes' and gendered tastes,

specific genres of reading are particularly discriminating. Science fiction, horror and fantasy cluster on axis 2 with contemporary forms like rock music and modern art. Romance fiction and self-help books are similarly strongly associated with 'inward-facing' forms of taste and participation on axis 3. This might indicate a role for reading tastes in the formation of a form of 'affective' or emotional capital, based around expertise in and concern with the techniques and management of intimate relationships and emotional life, accessible in particular to women, a point explored below. Reading is clearly less significant than music in the stratification of tastes, across the range of our genres. However, in the cases of modern literature, romances and, to a lesser extent, self-help books and science fiction, horror and fantasy, it is clear that some genres of books are divisive and contentious, with gender and education exerting the strongest lines of division.

All seven genres contribute to axis 4, revealing that moderate cultural participants like romances, dislike science fiction, horror and fantasy, and are indifferent to biographies, while 'voracious' ones register modern literature as a preference. This is closely related to attendance at musical concerts and a strong disinclination to watch much television, indicating that modern literature is more likely to form part of the profiles of omnivorous readers than certain forms of genre fiction.

Table 6.1 reports the frequencies of liking and disliking these genres. Despite the inclusion of a number of genres of popular fiction, biographies and autobiographies emerge as the most frequently chosen, with over half of the sample expressing a preference for them and 40 per cent choosing 1 or 2 on the scale of liking. Dislikes are significant, with only 'who-dunnits' and 'biographies/autobiographies' more liked than disliked. For these two genres the pattern of response is more evenly spread across the seven points of the scale, indicating that they generate the least strong negative feelings: that is, they are generally liked, but not particularly strongly, by around half our sample. Finally, note the relatively intense dislike of modern literature. Strong liking of this genre is expressed by only 4 per cent of the sample, with almost a third of the sample strongly disliking it. There is, though, a strong and consistent correlation between liking modern literature and liking auto/biographies, which, in combination with their relative proximity both to each other and to other symbolically loaded forms of cultural taste or participation within our space of lifestyles, suggest that both genres are interpreted as consecrated or canonised forms of literature. However, we need to be cautious. Focus group and household interviews suggest that biographies and autobiographies of television and media celebrities are the most popular choices. Those mentioned include autobiographies of the glamour model Jordan, the journalist, broadcaster and quiz-show host Ann Robinson, actor David Niven, the racing driver Michael Schumacher, the footballer Jim Baxter and high-profile biographies of, for example, the comedian Billy Connolly and Diana, Princess of Wales. Whilst an interest in reading about the lives of others is a persistent and self-evident justification for these kinds of choices, there is little evidence here of any scholarly interest in biography. Rather, we see in these selections

Table 6.1 Literary genres, likes and dislikes

<i>Genres</i>	<i>Degrees of liking</i>			<i>Degrees of disliking</i>			<i>Likes</i>		<i>Dislikes</i>	
	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>
Who-dunnits	20 (<i>n</i> = 304)	10 (158)	17 (268)	13 (199)	9 (148)	7 (110)	20 (316)	47 (730)	37 (574)	
Science fiction, fantasy and horror	8	6	7	7	8	10	51	22	69	
Romances	(131)	(94)	(111)	(105)	(124)	(158)	(792)	(336)	(1074)	
	12	9	10	11	10	12	33	31	55	
	(184)	(136)	(162)	(175)	(157)	(183)	(523)	(482)	(863)	
Biographies/ autobiographies	20	19	16	12	7	6	17	54	30	
Modern literature	(308)	(297)	(247)	(192)	(111)	(101)	(264)	(852)	(476)	
	4	9	11	15	14	12	30	24	56	
	(68)	(142)	(165)	(231)	(216)	(193)	(466)	(375)	(875)	
Religious books	4	4	6	8	9	16	51	14	76	
	(69)	(64)	(90)	(118)	(140)	(248)	(792)	(223)	(1180)	
Self-help books	13	10	11	11	9	13	36	34	59	
	(99)	(154)	(176)	(167)	(147)	(207)	(564)	(429)	(918)	

Total *n* = 1564 (columns do not include responses 'have not heard of' or 'refusal').

a further illustration of the place of the field of reading in ‘mediating’ other fields of cultural production, be it sport, film or television. For some readers, such as Edie, a young mother and part-time reconciliations clerk from southern England, who had recently read biographies of David Beckham and Lulu, they represent an extension of an interest in celebrity and television cultures as small ‘escapes’ from reality (as we discussed in Chapter 4):

Edie: Yeah, somebody I know who’s in the limelight and you’re interested in their way of life I think.

Interviewer: And is it because you see their way of life, you’d like your way of life to be like their way of life or ...?

Edie: I wouldn’t say that I’d like it to be like that but I’m just interested sort of what they do on an everyday, I know what we do on an everyday basis but just to see where somebody’s rich and famous what they would do, I find it really interesting.

For others, such as Gerry, reading biographies is precisely a means of articulating a distance from this same celebrity culture:

The favourite one I’ve ever read, an autobiography, was Peter Ustinov’s *Oh Dear Me*. He was a very, very witty chap, very quick and very interesting guy, I thought. If something catches my eye, again I try to avoid things where it’s populist at the time. You’d never catch me reading David Beckham or something like that. Politicians, some politicians’ biographies I’ve found are interesting.

Whilst a preference for autobiographies and biographies can thus be interpreted as challenging as much as reinforcing notions of legitimate reading, the case of modern literature is less ambiguous. Those few interviewees who choose modern literature titles are, predictably, rich in cultural capital, graduates and professionals in ‘cultural’ occupations of various kinds. Thus James, a university lecturer from Wales, chooses the Dutch Second World War novel *The Assault* as his favourite, though explains the difficulty of making such a choice. And, as we saw in Chapter 4, Jenny, working in the west of Scotland as a creative writing tutor, explains her preferences by reference to recent literary prize winners and her reading of literary magazines.

However, and interestingly in the light of the criteria that inform the Bourdieusian hierarchy of literary forms (where form and style are more central to consecrated and legitimate literature), for Jenny it is a concern with ‘social realism’ and the ability of modern literature to speak to and of the contemporary experience that informs her preference:

Dealing with, discussing the way things are, what it’s like to live here and now, social problems and the human condition, what it’s like to be human in this area, in this time.

The role of literary prizes, significant in the attribution of cultural capital in the context of what Bourdieu would term the heteronomous, market-oriented contemporary field of literary production (English, 2005; Street, 2005), has a quite specific impact upon the professional middle-classes whose use of them emerged from focus-group and interview discussions. Inka, a member of a focus group organized with professionals in London describes this:

Inka: As it comes out. ... I buy the Booker short list, the Orange short list, ... and I read some of them! But I you know, I buy them and I work at it.

Moderator: Why do you do that?

Inka: Hm – because I don't know how to choose otherwise my you know, there's an author I like so, years and years ago I bought the Booker short list, I read Margaret Attwood and now I love Margaret Attwood.

Other recent prize-winning titles mentioned include Arundhati Roy, winner of the 1997 Booker Prize, Yann Martel, winner of the 2002 Booker Prize, and Zadie Smith, winner of the Whitbread Prize, amongst others, in 2000. The evidence here seems to place engagement with modern literary culture, even as that culture increasingly mirrors the promotional tactics of cultural industries from other fields, firmly within the realms of the educated urban professional.

In addition to questions about genres, and in contrast to Bourdieu and subsequent studies of reading tastes, we included in the survey questions about six specific works, asking whether respondents had read, were likely to read, or had heard of them (see Table 6.2).

The least read and least known book, by some distance, is the memoir of the African-American poet Maya Angelou, whilst *Madame Bovary* by Gustave Flaubert has a readership amongst our sample equivalent to that for the romance novelist Catherine Cookson, for so long the writer whose books were most

Table 6.2 Knowledge of and taste for literary works (percentages by row)

Title	Have read	Thinking of reading	Have heard of but not likely to read	Have not heard of the book
	% (n)	% (n)	% (n)	% (n)
<i>Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets</i>	21 (330)	14 (221)	61 (955)	4 (56)
<i>Pride and Prejudice</i>	38 (594)	9 (142)	46 (714)	7 (114)
<i>The Solace of Sin</i>	8 (118)	7 (114)	37 (576)	48 (754)
<i>I Know Why the Caged Birds Sing</i>	4 (62)	4 (65)	12 (186)	80 (1249)
<i>The Firm</i>	17 (268)	12 (189)	36 (561)	35 (545)
<i>Madame Bovary</i>	7 (106)	3 (51)	30 (473)	60 (933)

Total $n = 1564$.

borrowed from British libraries. *The Solace of Sin* was the most frequently borrowed title in the UK in 1999–2000. Here the most significant divide may be between titles, such as *Pride and Prejudice*, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* and *The Firm*, which have been subject to the promotional and adaptation work of the film and television industries, alongside those of the publishing industries, and thus have a *cross-field* resonance in ways that other titles do not. Reading of the remaining titles, by Angelou, Cookson and Flaubert, is significantly lower. It is difficult, in this sense, to separate out tastes for reading in one genre from tastes for similar genres in other fields. The cultural map demonstrates nicely the proximity between liking romance fiction and liking romance films, for example, but the smaller numbers of readers of the less well publicised, ‘un-mediated’, books might be those more likely to be dedicated readers of any genre, be it literary fiction, literary memoir or romances.

Pride and Prejudice was chosen as a favoured title by two of our interviewees, Susan, a hospital consultant from South Wales, and Cherie, a heritage worker and tour guide from York. Susan describes owning ‘three copies, probably’ and re-reading the book every two or three years. Cherie, who also reads crime and detective fiction, suggests her choice of an absolute favourite is a tie between Austen’s *Persuasion* and *Pride and Prejudice*, which is ‘really funny and really witty and I love it to bits’. The experience of these two professional women is in stark contrast to that of Hilda, who works part-time in a shop on the Belfast housing estate where she lives. An avid reader of romance fiction, Hilda has more recently, upon the recommendation of a friend, shifted her preference towards the science-fiction and horror books of James Herbert, explaining the change thus:

Yes, you know everybody starts off on the love stories so they do, and then after a while you read so many love stories they all take the same plot. Girl meets boy ... they fall out, have a mad row then they declare their feelings at the end. It gets boring after a while.

Hilda explains her lack of engagement with *Pride and Prejudice* at some length, referring to perceptions of its difficulty gleaned from television adaptations:

Hilda: I seen a clip, you know what really put me off, you know it’s been on the TV and all and it seems just too heavy. I’ve read period dramas before, but that there seems ... Well maybe it’s just that I seen a clip of it on the TV and I just didn’t like it.

Interviewer: When you would have read romances in the past and love stories – would they all have been set in the present day?

Hilda: Agh yes they were. I don’t know what it is, because *Pride and Prejudice* has always been around. I just never fancied that there ... I have a weird way of thinking! Something just has to take my fancy with it but if I take a notion, no I don’t like that ...

Interviewer: You wouldn’t tend to change your mind then if you decide that you’re not interested?

Hilda: No, naw. I've seen times I've been looking for something to read and I've lifted Mills and Boons, but I think I would quicker lift ten Mills and Boons than *Pride and Prejudice*! It's probably a very good book ... but I just, no I don't fancy it.

Her preference for Mills and Boon books over *Pride and Prejudice* is presented as a personal idiosyncrasy but, when viewed in combination with her earlier disavowal of the formulaic nature of such romance books, Hilda communicates a sense of defensiveness about her own reading tastes that echoes those discussed in earlier studies of women's reading (Radway, 1984).

A similar defensiveness is expressed by Rita, a retired post-office counter clerk from the west of Scotland, and another keen Mills and Boon reader, keen to justify her choices in the context of perceptions of romances as salacious:

Aye, Mills and Boons ones are alright, you can get some romances that, they're ... rubbish. That's why I wouldn't read Jackie Collins, do you know what I'm talking about! [Laughs] I think there's more excitement in Mills and Boons ... Yeah, if they never get out of bed, to me that's no story. I like excitement!

Scholars of women's reading have identified this defensiveness as symptomatic of the gendered construction of the literary canon. But what we might also be seeing here is women's use of romance fiction to accumulate and display a form of emotional capital that is of benefit to them both within the domestic sphere and within specific occupational settings. It allows, through the narratives of 'escape' that characterise both scholarly and readerly accounts of women's reading, both a practical means of re-claiming time from other duties and a means of interrogating, reflecting upon and developing expertise in the management of intimate relationships and emotional life. This form of capital is more readily accessible to women than men, whose preferences are often premised on an assumption of their proximity to, rather than their distance from, more accredited and legitimate forms of cultural engagement. Thus Gerry, a police officer from the northwest of England, who also likes *Lord of the Rings*, is keen to point out the pleasures of the 'different levels' of thinking that he derives from the multi-layered texts that are his preferred choices in the genre of who-dunnits:

Thrillers, I like to think on different levels, there's a chap called Ian Rankin, that I will read that detective type story but I'm thinking of like Wilbur Smith I think. And obviously you get things like *Lord of the Rings* which is again it's different. Multi-layered stories I like.

Similarly Fruit Bat, an optometrist technician from the north of England, explains the fascination underlying his preference for science fiction, and the best-selling science-fiction/comedy writer Terry Pratchett:

I find it interesting to read about other people's concepts and visions and new slants that normally have some parallel in this world anyway. I'm a big fan of

Terry Pratchett's *Discworld*, I don't know if you've heard about the world on the back of a turtle, it's flat. And that's always very interesting because it's like looking at this world but through a distorted lens, everything's the same but twisted somehow.

The ascription of meaningfulness to men's popular reading is in stark contrast to the tendency for women readers of romances to be critical or partial in their enthusiasms. The accompanying tendency for women who *reject* romances on stylistic grounds, based upon the presumed simplicity of plots and limitations of story-lines, suggests a specific social location for romance fiction. Educated, professional women in the qualitative sample are particularly keen to distance themselves from this genre. Cherie, the tour guide, ascribes a kind of emotional and intellectual immaturity to it:

Yeah. I just can't get into the romance ones. I think there's a time in your life you read these things, when you're about 17, do you know what I mean, you're sort of into the kind of romances. But now – it's a strange thing for grown up women to still read, I think.

Seren, a social worker from South Wales sees in the appreciation of romances a kind of false consciousness at work in women unable to recognise the reality of their lives or the inventedness of the texts:

Because it's not real, is it? You know? It's just not real. It's ... I think it gives people expectations that aren't really there. I think there has to be a, anything that's written has to have a, a basis in reality, you know? And while I enjoy escapism, yes? I know that that's escapism, you know? And that is, is a clear part but if I'm reading a book, it's got ... it's got to be real.

The concern with reality or seriousness here also emerges in the discussion of the self-help books. Enthusiasts for this genre in our qualitative samples are rare. Helen, a part-time supermarket worker, housewife and mother from the east Midlands, explains her interest in such books as part of a more general concern with healthy living. Euan, a gay heritage professional in his mid-30s, also from the east Midlands, explains his preference for self-help books as an extension of useful techniques of self-management, again reflective of a more emotional form of capital:

I do try, I suppose because I'm a bit fanatic about it, I do try and improve myself, like I think I'm learning something if I'm doing something. I've been having counselling myself for the last couple of years to improve in things, so I do find that very, I find self-help books very interesting and not only in helping myself because I also, one of the good things about counselling is that I've found that it helps me understand how other people are working and where they're coming from.

Whilst this kind of articulation is not common, it suggests that reading is an activity with unique characteristics. It is reading itself that is legitimate, for some readers, rather than particular genres or the stylistic or aesthetic qualities of texts. But within this conception there are persistent divisions, which are visible in relation both to gender and education.

Table 6.3 presents the results of a regression analysis of tastes in reading with education and with gender. Unsurprisingly perhaps, women are almost 15 times more likely than men to choose romances as a preferred genre. In fact, women are more likely to choose all of our genres with the exception of auto/biographies, where gender is not a significant factor in determining preference, and science fiction, which might be interpreted as a popular form with similar potential uses as romances for men. A male reader, Terry, a warehouse manager from South London, describes the types of escape enabled by his reclamation of time at work through reading. When asked why he chose science fiction, fantasy and horror (with J. R. R. Tolkien and Terry Brookes being his favourite authors), he explains that he 'Just always used them as a mental release, or just to take my mind off things or get my mind into it or my mind off other things'.

Tastes for science fiction, although far from exclusively male in our sample, might be considered 'masculine' through the affinity between this genre and technical and technological forms of expertise to which men lay claim. Reading tastes for men include technical manuals, trade journals and other instrumental forms of reading, which are often chosen ahead of reading for pleasure. The position of science fiction reflects a skewing of men's tastes towards these technical forms of reading and might again be indicative of the existence of gendered forms of cultural capital. Whilst men have ready access to technical forms they have little attachment to texts tapping emotional capital, which is associated with other genres but most clearly with romances, self-help and modern literature. The significance of this skewing in terms of cultural capital, though, is revealed by the relative position of the most strongly gendered popular forms in relation to educational qualifications. People with degrees are almost twice as likely to prefer science fiction as a genre and are half as likely to like romances as those who have no educational qualifications. In fact, romance is the only genre that readers with degrees are less likely to prefer. Emotional capital, then, might be a less convertible form of cultural capital.

Table 6.3 Preferences for genres of literature, by gender and education, binary logistic regression analysis

	<i>Who-dunnits</i>	<i>Science fiction</i>	<i>Romances</i>	<i>Biography/autobiography</i>	<i>Modern literature</i>	<i>Self-help</i>	<i>Religious</i>
Female	1.04	0.295	14.968	0.992	1.472	1.3	1.446
O-level	0.974	1.568	0.858	1.844	1.090	1.345	0.793
A-level	1.09	1.127	0.608	2.474	2.289	1.263	1.032
Degree	1.195	1.950	0.597	2.79	4.591	1.715	1.249

Reference category: male; no educational qualifications.

The position of modern literature and auto/biographies as a more legitimate cluster of reading tastes is also confirmed here. Readers with degrees are almost three times more likely to prefer biographies and four and a half times more likely to prefer modern literature than those with no educational qualifications. If we take the partially tautological conception of high culture as that which those with higher levels of cultural capital are more likely to engage in, then book reading in general (with the exception of reading romances) and the reading of modern literature and auto/biographies clearly qualifies. Despite the internal divisions informed by questions of gender, and the linkages between the literary field and other aspects of the media field that result in the popularisation or democratisation of 'the canon', the field of book reading is still overwhelmingly populated by the educated middle classes.

6.4 Newspapers and magazines: the uses of everyday reading

The relative rarity and specificity of participation in book cultures can be contrasted with the more popular and dispersed engagement in newspaper and magazine reading. Whilst reading books evokes, for some readers at least, a sense of the distinctiveness of reading as a leisure pursuit, reading newspapers and magazines is far more integrated into the everyday. Such reading either structures the day in various ways or provides practical and personal means of instruction and information, which respondents can use in various forms of identity-work or in their activities in other fields.

Newspaper reading is popular, with 76 per cent of the sample choosing a preferred daily title. Most popular are *The Sun*, chosen by 266 or 17 per cent of the sample, and *The Daily Mail*, chosen by 237, or 15 per cent. Amongst the broadsheets the *Daily Telegraph* is the most popular, being chosen by 6 per cent of the sample. *The Financial Times* is chosen by only eight people as their preferred title. These small numbers are significant in themselves in relation to the kind of questions of social and political engagement that Bourdieu ascribed to newspaper readership. Moreover, in the case of the field of reading – and of book culture in particular – the large amount of space given over to book, film and music reviews within the broadsheet press and their relatively restricted audience again hints at the intensive participation of the relatively few as driving the coordinates of the space of reading. None of the national broadsheets gains a larger audience than local and regional papers, which, when various significant titles (such as the *Western Mail* or the *Belfast Telegraph*) are added to generic preferences for local titles, amount to some 10 per cent of daily newspaper readers' preferred titles.

Similarly, 68 per cent of the sample is able, when prompted, to identify a favourite magazine title. Over 300 titles are nominated, ranging from *The Economist* (which only two respondents choose), men's and women's lifestyle magazines, generic sports or motoring magazines, to specific forms of hobby or professional interest magazines such as *Ceramic Review* or *Nursing Times*. This diversity reflects the size and scale of this sector of publishing, though the range makes statistical analyses of small numbers difficult. The single most popular title,

which 71 people in the sample name, was *Take a Break*, the 'true-life' magazine that mixes reader-submitted stories about real-life family dramas or tragedies with puzzles and competitions. In our focus group sample, this magazine is mentioned by women in a group of semi-skilled workers in South Wales, and by Edith, a participant in a working-class pensioners group in the Midlands, who explains her use of it, with similar titles, in circulating reading material to her friends and neighbours:

Well I have *Take a Break* and *People's Friend*. My neighbour regularly has *My Weekly* so she gives me *My Weekly*. I also have *The Weekly News*, which is a Scots paper, when I've finished with that I give it to her, and it does the rounds.

In coding the magazines into approximate categories, women's magazines emerge as the single most popular category chosen by 20 per cent of respondents. Magazines devoted to celebrity culture and entertainment are the second most popular category, chosen by 8 per cent, with mechanical and technical magazines (including computer magazines) the next most popular category, chosen by 7 per cent. The mediating role of the field of reading for other fields, as identified by Bourdieu himself (1998) but developed and fleshed out by Bourdieusian scholars of the media (Benson, 1998; Benson and Neveu, 2005), is important here. Newspaper reviews, alongside specialist film and music, travel or food magazines, and particularly women's or men's 'lifestyle-oriented' magazines, help organise and shape activities in other fields. Terri, a trade-union official who took part in a focus group of women professionals in London, nicely summarises this:

I read the paper once a week no I read the paper all week, but I only buy it once a week. I read through it. It's actually *The Guardian*. I read all the reviews of books that I am never going to read, plays I am never going to see and that's a habit. A habit idea that there's a kind of culture going on out there that I am not sort of dipping into. That I just think, well, it's like my contact with it.

At the same time, newspaper readership, in market research terms, has become a mark/symbol of class, with 'tabloid' readership versus 'broadsheet' or quality press becoming synonymous with distinctions between working-class and middle-class audiences. These tropes are clearly evident in a number of our focus group discussions and interviews, alongside the perceived knowledge of the political and social values of various newspapers which readers are keen to associate with or to disassociate themselves from. Readership of *The Guardian* is ascribed to the 'intellectual' focus group convenor amongst service workers in rural Scotland, *The Daily Mail* is labelled 'a racist dishwasher' by a member of the group organised with black professionals. There seems to be much at stake in these choices, with newspaper readership generating significantly more disagreement amongst

respondents than reading books. Within the group of black professionals, for example, Eric ‘confesses’ to reading the tabloid Sunday paper, *The News of the World*, an assertion which Laura describes as ‘brave’ in the context of a discussion of ‘culture’:

Eric: But what I’m struggling with is why do you think it’s brave to say I read *The News of the World*.

Laura: Because I think that there are still benchmarks and I think that we do actually, deep down still think that there’s good taste and there’s bad taste. We may not be honest about it.

Eric ultimately demurs to this accepted opinion within the group by emphasising his particular preference for a technology/gadget supplement that comes with the paper as part of his professional need to keep on top of such developments. Lee, who works in the film industry and is a member of another London-based focus group organised with top level managers and business elites, marks his assumed ‘difference’ from his peers by his ability to range across different types of paper based upon a sophisticated appreciation of the respective trajectories and resonances of particular titles:

I used to drive, the guy I used to buy it off at the kiosk at the end of my street, a couple of years I used to drive him completely insane when I’d buy *The Guardian* and *The Sun* but I did. I started doing it when Kelvin McKenzie was still editing *The Sun* and, there was something very amusing, *The Guardian*’s my natural political home. I would buy *The Sun*, I’d never buy *The Mail*. And *The Telegraph* – I sort of feel that I can discount its politics because I know what they are but for example I would never ever, ever buy *The Times*, I’d find it so objectionably reactionary. *The Telegraph* seems to me in some ways much more liberal. I mean liberal enough that if I discount the political opinion I get the information whereas *The Times* I don’t even believe what they put in *The Times*.

Such detailed reflection and anxiety about the readership of newspapers which our professionals demonstrate is less evident in discussions amongst a group of unskilled workers in Swansea. Focusing on their preferred newspaper, *The Sun*, they emphasise the ease of engagement with the paper, and its lightness of subject matter – with something of a split between the bulk of the group’s concern with the paper’s emphasis on celebrity culture and ‘gossip’ and Kev’s particular concern with the paper’s presentation of the views of its readers via the letters page:

Kev: *The Sun* is good.

Steve: Gossip.

Liz: Gossip, yes.

Wayne: You read about celebrities. You like to know what’s going on in the celebrity world don’t you?

- Kev:* It doesn't bother me that. It's other people's views. They've got a column where everybody writes in on different subjects.
- Moderator:* Readers' letters?
- Kev:* Yes. The most popular things, about illegal immigrants and stuff like that. I like reading about stuff like that, what people's views are.
- Daz:* I think Liz hit the nail on the head, *The Sun* is gossip like. It's entertaining, like. Just for a quick read in the morning.
- Kev:* Yes, I think.
- Wayne:* If you're reading in *The Sun* and *The Star* something about celebrities, you know half of it is going to be bullshit don't you?

In both cases, though, the key to the readership of tabloids, as Wayne forcefully proposes, is that they are not to be taken seriously. Rather they are papers to be picked up, 'just for a quick read' in the context of a busy working day, and put down again.

The ways in which focus groups talked about newspapers and magazines with specific targeted readerships suggest that they have an important mediating role in the identity work of their readers. There is evidence of a nuanced account of the different place of identity-specific titles amongst their respective readerships. The relative merits of *The Voice* and *New Nation* as indicative of 'black culture' are discussed by Afro-Caribbean groups and, amongst lesbians, *Diva*, *Gay Times* and other magazines are conceptualised and critiqued as texts that do the work of creating lesbian and gay identities. Women's and men's lifestyle magazines attract little critical discussion on those terms, but men from a range of positions (semi-skilled men in Swansea, black professionals in London) report the use of magazines such as *FHM*, *Men's Health* and *Arena*, which have been implicated in the emergence of a masculine consumer subject (Jackson, Stevenson and Brooks, 2001). When women report reading women's magazines, it again reflects their tendency to diminish their own reading practices. Catherine, a nurse who took part in a focus group organised with young professionals and students, claims to read about 18 magazines a month, although she is quick to dismiss them as 'all the same'. Though these 18 include music and film magazines as well as the four women's magazines she actively subscribes to – '*Cosmo*, *Glamour*, all the cheesy ones', as she describes them – Catherine 'doesn't know' why she reads them but is perhaps less keen to justify a guilty pleasure to a group of relative strangers. She is happier explaining her more 'legitimate' reading preferences for the quirky Canadian novelist Douglas Coupland, for example. Tanya, a member of the lesbian focus group who works for a large media organisation, describes herself as 'a magazine girl', but with a similarly partial enthusiasm for women's magazines, admitting to 'quite' liking 'crappy *Cosmo* rubbish'. Her particular enthusiasm, though, is for the *New Yorker* magazine, which she describes as exemplifying all that is good about contemporary journalism:

So *New Yorker* is just like if you were an alien from Mars and you had landed on the planet and you just wanted to quickly look what was around

environmentally, or what was around in terms of human interest driven kind of politics. Loads of critiques and lots of press. So *New Yorker* is my one of my favourites.

This kind of ‘global’ magazine brand is also evident in another of the London professional focus groups. Maya, who also reads *Cosmopolitan*, and Lee explain the appeal of *The New Yorker*:

Maya: It’s long articles, sometimes quite heavy politically but other times completely light entertainment, they did one on Puff Daddy once on you know his taste in fashion, they do things about the war and so on, so it’s a mixture of articles ...

Lee: For a while *Vanity Fair* when it started, I used to read, come to think of it but then I think after what’s-her-name moved on – Tina Brown.

Maya: Tina Brown, I – it got much more ... and the pieces were all over long and over written and less, whereas the *New Yorker* ones are really quite well considered and well chosen and things like that, you know just – popular culture, ancient history, modern politics, you find a bit of everything.

The international aspect is significant here. Professional elites in London are drawing on texts, and interpreting them as definers of their world. This appreciation of ‘a bit of everything’ that such magazines represent (from the hip-hop producer and performer Puff Daddy to ‘ancient history’) allows the participation in a certain sector of magazine culture – to the extent of knowing about the particular personalities engaged in the industry – to be emblematic of a certain omnivorous, cosmopolitan, professional orientation with which these readers align themselves. It is a world away from the circulation of *Take a Break* described by Edith above – a distance which suggests that, even in this more apparently open and accessible sector of the field of reading, processes of distinction still operate.

6.5 Conclusion

The field of reading reveals the key contribution of reading tastes in the constitution and the distribution of cultural capital. The more focused and in-depth exploration of the broader field of reading and the more restricted field of books suggests some important and persistent relationships.

By including popular genres and titles and considering other kinds of reading material besides books, we have been able to provide a picture of the role of reading tastes across the British population as a whole, rather than, as Bourdieu provided, between fractions of the dominant class. We see, however, that participation in ‘book cultures’ is specifically socially located within urban, educated and cosmopolitan populations. Unlike the field of music no strong clusters of taste emerge from the field of reading, and the relationships of liking and disliking do not appear to be as intense, with the exception of the gendered opposition between science-fiction, horror and fantasy, and romances. Gender is a particularly

dynamic force shaping the field with differences *between* genres, and indeed within genres (notably within biographies and autobiographies), differentiating activity and preferences on axis 3 of the cultural map. Different reading preferences contribute to the generation of different forms of capital – ‘emotional’ relating to the knowledge and management of the self and intimate relationships, and ‘technical’ relating to professional, practical and technological uses of reading. These forms appear differently accessible to women and men, and might also have different value when converted to other forms of capital.

Perhaps surprisingly, few claims are made that reading books is a superior activity in itself, and this is further testimony to our argument in Chapter 4 regarding the weakness of overtly snobbish cultural orientations. Whilst intimations that reading non-fiction genres constitute self-development or self-education are present marginally, reading as entertainment or simply as structuring the day is far more common, even amongst those rich in cultural capital. Readership of canonical titles such as *Madame Bovary* is relatively rare and there are few pronouncements of the inherent value of such literary texts, at least in snobbish or exclusionary terms. The popularity of titles like *Pride and Prejudice* suggests at the very least an altered hierarchy of literary value. The reading of these titles alongside participation in other popular cultural fields suggests that engagement with ‘the literary’ in its canonical or modern incarnations may be one element of an omnivorous portfolio for the professional middle classes.

An orientation towards legitimate or high culture emerges from the consistently strong association between auto/biographies and modern literature. The latter in particular is significantly more liked by those with higher levels of educational qualifications. Readers of modern literature are far more connected with, and arguably perhaps far more the target of, the promotional activities of the publishing industry through the annual round of prizes. At the same time, claims to legitimacy are mitigated somewhat by the primacy of autobiographies and biographies of athletes or television celebrities, as an extension of the pleasures of gossip and chat rather than any tendency towards auto-didacticism, disinterestedness or scholastic reflection. The importance of film and television adaptations to opening up the knowledge of the literary, and of newspaper and magazine cultures too, is perhaps the most significant finding. As well as continuing to be synonymous with cultural capital itself, reading is also a field of mediation between other fields. Tastes for newspaper and magazine reading provide important examples of the everyday uses of reading for a far wider variety of respondents, both to negotiate their place in political cultures and in their engagement with identity-work of various kinds. The contrast between the serious and somewhat anxious readers of broadsheet newspapers or global magazine titles and the relatively mundane uses of the tabloids or *Take a Break* indicates the place of more readily accessed forms of reading in the distribution of cultural capital.

Literacy remains a key resource in contemporary society. Reading is itself a well-regarded, legitimate form of activity, but one which serves as a conduit to other forms of cultural capital. It provides access to probably the most important

of all forms of cultural capital, the educational qualifications that define its institutional form. Reading is a prerequisite for other forms too. Access to technical and subcultural capital is made available by specialist magazines. Arguably emotional capital accrues in some instances from familiarity with self-help books. It probably helps in selecting the right items to demonstrate command of objective cultural capital. No doubt some of these functions are now served by electronic media; images printed and broadcast are sources of knowledge and guides to cultural judgment. Yet reading remains a crucial avenue, or intermediation, for the accumulation of cultural capital.

7 A sociological canvas of visual art

7.1 Introduction

Visual art used to be neglected in the sociology of culture. Recently, however, it has received more attention, with significant empirical studies by David Halle (1993) on American homes and Colin Painter (2002) focusing on Britain. Michael Grenfell and Cheryl Hardy (2003, 2007) have also built on Bourdieu's framework to discuss contemporary cultural practices in visual art, including museum and art gallery usage practices in Europe and the US as well as historical developments in painting. They confirm Bourdieu's view that the organising structure of society coordinates individuals' senses and perceptions of their surroundings in terms of their class positions. Museum audiences remain middle class despite measures taken by governments and management to improve their accessibility. Familiarity with painters and schools of painting continues to correlate with social class in a world where class and education shape entry into the cultivated world. Craig Upright (2004), also inspired by Bourdieu, shows in a study of the US that it is not just the transmission of cultural capital and previous socialisation from education and family that affects cultural practices, but also current social relationships and, in particular, marriage, an issue we explore further in Chapter 12. A contrary view is advanced by Tak Wing Chan and John Goldthorpe (2007), who examined attendance at art galleries and museums in the UK as part of their discussion of social stratification and cultural consumption. Operating with a narrow interpretation of Bourdieu, they sought a direct homology between class and cultural taste. In its absence, they argue instead for the importance of status and, consequently, the insignificance of economic relations. Referring to our work (Silva, 2006), they imply that taste in visual art is not connected with class; a claim which, for reasons that will become clear, we disagree with.

Our exploration of visual art in this chapter refers to engagements with museums and art galleries and the materials displayed at these venues. We privilege engagements with paintings taking legitimate artists and works as benchmarks to assess the connections of individuals with visual art. However, we are also mindful of a broader visual culture in the contemporary world where images in photography, film, the media and the Internet have great significance.

While accepting that images may visualise or conceal social differences as well as constituting them, as Bourdieu explored in his use of photography in *Distinction*, our focus in this chapter is more restricted, privileging the analysis of the field of visual art. Yet, to explore this field properly we take account of the embeddedness of visual art images in the wider visual culture. For the contours of the visual art field are not clearly delimited, as is shown by our qualitative research material.

Chapter 3 showed that, whereas music divides tastes within the survey sample in the strongest and most contested way, visual art differentiates a particular set of exclusive tastes more than any other cultural field. In our cultural map, visual art is the second most dominant field on axis 1 and by far the greatest contributor to axis 4. Axis 1 differentiates on the basis of cultural participation. Axis 4 distinguishes those with moderate participation in cultural life, mostly through contemporary and commercial culture, from those who have a voracious engagement with, and high levels of interest and participation in, legitimate culture. We find that involvement in visual culture as a whole is pervasive and intense, with different groups invested in different manifestations of the visual. The field of visual art, however, is more restricted. The intensity of participation in visual art is highly relevant for social position, as is shown by the levels of attendance (and non-attendance) at art galleries and museums of different groups of people, and by indicators of ownership of original and high-quality reproductions of art works.

Our emphasis on participation fits in with the overall tenor of Bourdieu's claims (1984, 1990) that access to culture, predicated on deportment, behaviour, income and manners, is more critical for the ways individuals are perceived by others, and ultimately positioned, than is a knowledge of the context of the culture in which the goods are positioned. Knowing and liking are entirely insufficient to characterize an individual's position in highly consecrated fields, where active practice carries greater weight. As Vera Zolberg (1992: 199) remarked, knowledgeable appreciation is often left to expert professionals. Understanding difficult art in any depth does not enhance one's position, and rejection of some modern art may indeed raise social position when it is accompanied by the embodied practices that actually count. Participation is the context for exhibiting forms of public comportment as a standard of conduct for the polite, refined and cultured, and nowhere more so than in the field of visual art.

Our data allow us to understand the relationship between the structure of taste, knowledge and participation in visual art. We explored the topic in focus group discussions. In the interviews, both with selected households and with elite participants, we discussed paintings and reproductions, including those on the walls of the homes to which we had access. We also discussed their personal engagements, past and present, with visual art. In Section 7.2 we draw on our interview material to explore connections between taste and knowledge in relation to two paintings exemplifying different positions in the British art field. This analysis shows individuals positioned predominantly according to possession of cultural capital, but with inflections linked to particular demographic and biographical patterns. We also find that forms of distinction associated with class

divisions are specific to the traditions of the field of visual art, albeit reinvigorated through a newer 'enterprise culture'. In Section 7.3 we discuss consumption of visual art as found both in our survey and interviews. This confirms connections between class and cultural practice, where the more educated and those in higher occupations frequent art galleries and museums more often and own art in greater proportion than any other section of the population. But we also find some surprises concerning the involvement of women and the younger members of minority ethnic groups. In Section 7.4 we examine the involvement of individuals with different types of art and a range of artists on the basis of our survey data. Different social worlds are detected in line with both the historicity of this field and its class contours. Yet, exposure to different types of art and the specific historical engagements of groups of individuals bring in particular inflections that challenge neat connections with class, particularly when viewed through divisions of gender, age and ethnicity. In conclusion we compare our findings with those of Bourdieu, noting the relevance of combining taste, knowledge and participation in the classification of cultural practices in the field of visual art and their relations with cultural distinction.

7.2 Contrasting paintings

Our most detailed examination of engagement with the art field was made by asking interviewees to talk about two pictures we showed them: J. M. W. Turner's *The Fighting Temeraire Tugged to her Last Berth to be Broken Up* (1838) and David Hockney's *Paper Pools* (1980) (Figures 7.1 and 7.2). Both are representative of different traditions within the British art field. Turner, classically defined as an English romantic landscape artist, laid the foundations for Impressionism. The picture we chose is perhaps Turner's best-known picture and it hangs in the National Gallery in London. Hockney is an important contributor to the British Pop Art movement of the 1960s and one of the most influential artists of the twentieth century. The picture chosen is part of his 'paper pool series', a very well known subject in his work. Copyright restrictions on his earlier paintings limited our choice. The two pictures were presented to interviewees in good-quality laminated reproductions in A4 sizes. We asked them whether they liked the pictures, would like to have them on their walls, recognised the paintings, knew who the painters were, and generally engaged in conversation about them. The rate of recognition was, unsurprisingly, much higher for the Turner painting than for the Hockney, as was the rate of liking, captured as the predominant reaction of the interviewee, including the replies for ambivalent cases to the question asking whether they would like to 'live with' the painting on their own walls. Among those 42 who took part in the household interviews and engaged with the two paintings (two did not discuss them), the vast majority like the Turner (32), with men and women at similar rates, while only seven like the Hockney.

The reactions of interviewees to the two paintings identify three groups: (1) confident amateurs; (2) relaxed consumers; and (3) defensive individuals. These do not immediately map on to levels of cultural capital, although particular

levels predominate in each group. Their characteristics resonate with the findings from focus group discussions and the survey. The three groups were classified primarily on the basis of reactions to the two paintings according to: (a) the identification of the painter, the painting itself, or of volunteered stories connected to either the painter or the painting; (b) the kind of personal reaction to and connection with the painter and/or the painting; and (c) the intensity of engagement with the pictures. Not all individuals express reactions combining these three characteristics. Confident amateurs are mostly knowledgeable about the painter or the paintings, and offer engaged stories about their own involvement or reactions connected to what they are seeing, expressing some intense involvement with visual art. Relaxed consumers also often have stories to tell, triggered by the pictures, and their talk evokes playful and sensory engagement, relating to their own consumption of visual material, such as pictures on the walls of their homes, to which they compare the Turner and Hockney reproductions. Defensive individuals often include a more personal, yet often distant, reaction to the paintings, including accounts of their indifference. Interestingly, for some in this latter group, intense feelings were displayed, although these related more to a sense of exclusion than to visual art *per se*.

Most of the 15 confident amateurs (mostly located on the culturally engaged right hand side of axis 1, as elaborated in Chapter 3 and 4 above) identify the painters, nearly all like the Turner and most of the few who like the Hockney (five out of seven) are in this group. Only one interviewee of minority ethnic origin (Susan Mirza Foot, a doctor in General Practice married to an arts lecturer) is included in this group. A range of knowledge is demonstrated. Some talk knowingly about the painting technique, the date of the painting, connections with Impressionism or modern art; others talk more precisely about the paintings themselves, having seen the Turner, knowing about Hockney's swimming pools series, and identifying historical and other art connections with them.

Presented with the first picture, Dougie Hammett, a scientist, promptly says 'It's a Turner. Recently done by Rolf Harris on *Rolf on Art*,' making a reference to a television arts programme, and to the place of visual art in contemporary visual culture. He goes on to say that the presenter:

talked a lot about Turner and how he painted these things and how he was fascinated by clouds and skies, I mean the whole thing is really the sky, it's as if this is just tagged on you know ... the ships are tagged on. Because you're immediately drawn to the flames in the sky ... almost, and then you're brought back, and then you see the ships. One's getting towed and then the flames coming out of the tug boat: Fighting Temeraire.

Having the interviewer confirm the identification of the painting, Dougie says, 'I'm watching too much telly!' And he is enthusiastic about the Hockney:

I like the abstract of this. And it's such a simple subject you know, a diving board and pool, the way that the waves are almost a sort of, again giving an

impression of the light reflecting from the surface of the swimming pool. But at the same time you can see through ... Yeah I like that.

Maria Derrick, a language teacher with a Masters degree, who dislikes the Turner, even though she appreciates that it is a painting with a particular place in art, comments about the Hockney:

Maria: I was going to say David Hockney with a swimming pool ... to me there's no depth at all, it's the sort of thing a teenager would draw in art lessons. The blue squiggles in the swimming pool are ... they supposed to be a reflection of something, the ripples in a swimming pool when somebody dives in? Or, the play of light on the water, although ... are they fish, are they eels? I don't like it at all. It's too dark, there's no depth to it. That one has a lot of depth, the number of colours in that was amazing, especially in the sky but this one to me, it's infantile.

Interviewer: Would you have it?

Maria: Definitely not, definitely not, I don't like either of them. Show me something by Renoir and I'll be happy, or Monet.

James Foot, an arts lecturer, identifies the Turner picture with a professional take:

I suppose it's knowing the painting as well. I went to the exhibition about it at the National Gallery actually, yes, which was fascinating and very rich painting, lovely style and the colours and that. Yes, really good.

About the Hockney James says:

Yes, I think it's ... it's quite nice, yes. Some of it I don't think is too well done like the ripples, I don't think. They look a bit like fish or something, the ripples but, but nice, yes. Nice, nice picture, nice sort of concept to it so ...

These accounts chime with those from some of our professional focus groups regarding the ownership of paintings. Discussing ownership of works of art, the focus group of the young professionals and students reveals that their very limited financial means preclude significant ownership of art, but, as David says, buying art 'is something I'd pay a lot more attention to if I should ever own my own house'. Their 'art' displays show connections, higher class upbringing, and an association of aesthetic pleasure with the valuable and more consecrated styles and artists, about which they easily talk and pass judgement:

Claire: My sister did A level Art and then a B-Tech in Art, she did various different arty things and she painted quite a few paintings and I've got two of them, yeah ...

Moderator: Anyone else?

- Lesley:* Got quite a few Rothko prints, got them for a wedding present and some paintings that Matt did as well, it's abstract, ... and oh, things from Ikea, photographs from Ikea and some African art that my brother in law brought us back.
- Patrick:* I got a pencil sketch which I bought for about fifteen quid from a local art show because it looked nice and it was a naked woman!... and I guess some photos I took myself which I've blown up and stuff.

As we indicated in Chapter 4, the proportion of individuals with high cultural capital in our qualitative sample is larger than in the nationally representative survey. The consistency connecting views about art to levels of cultural capital is particularly relevant to the involvement in visual art, even though they do not perfectly match with the groups here represented. This consistency is also expressed in focus group discussions where significant expressions of interest in art, appreciation or training, appear only in professional groups. Corroborating this, all the elite interviewees display close involvement with visual arts to a consistently high level, visiting art galleries regularly, especially in London, but also when travelling for work or on holiday, and being able to comment on the virtues of various world-class museums (Warde and Bennett, 2008).

Relaxed consumers comprise 14 people who relate to the paintings predominantly at the level of the senses, seeking an enjoyable engagement with the colours and the shapes, without generally demonstrating knowledge of either these paintings or other similar works. Some within this group dislike the paintings because they do not occasion a sense of pleasure. Only three in this group were classified as having high cultural capital. Interviewees from minority ethnic groups are concentrated more heavily in this group. Art as decoration is a predominant reference in the opinions expressed.

For example, Tony Bryant is white, married, has two children of school age, and is in a household with low levels of cultural capital. Holding the Turner he says 'Loads of lovely boats together, all the old paddle steamers, maybe'. Asked if it is a picture he likes, he replies:

Yeah, especially when I came from round by the sea area, so anything to do with the sea or that lot, beaches or anything like that, yeah, very, very nice picture. No idea who painted it obviously, it's a print of some sort.

Ferhan Ahmed is 44, Pakistani, married, has five children aged between 10 and 20, and works as a part-time driving instructor. He simply states that he likes the Turner and is more forthcoming, but rather inarticulate, about the Hockney:

- Ferhan:* Actually the way this picture is, I don't like it, but I do like the swimming pool, it's the [inaudible] I don't like that. Some, I don't know why but it doesn't look that nice.

Interviewer: Do you know what it is about it that you don't like or ...

Ferhan: Here – that appearance that's what it looks like, that's what it is actually. That's why I don't like it.

Surbhitra Gopal, is Indian, 53, married, has married children and works part-time as a school dinner supervisor:

Because it's ..., what is it?, a ship, a ship in the water, with the red sky, – no, not to put on my wall, I don't like pictures like this, I don't like it, it's not my kind – it's not – it's very, it's a ship on fire, or is that the way it's painted? ... it's just the way it's done. I wouldn't put this on my wall. [...] there's no beauty in it, is there?

No one in this group likes the Hockney and they consistently refer to the 'ripples' in the water as 'creatures', 'worms', 'tadpoles', 'leeches', 'sperm' or 'fish'. In some cases these images scare or annoy them. It is not just that they seek pictures as decoration but they have a particular taste in decorative pictures, be they of animals, flowers, landscape or portraits. The focus group of the retired working class illustrates this taste in an exchange about ownership of works of art where the ranking of paintings and photographs is somewhat disputed, while the importance of personal connection is reinforced:

Dorothy: I've got two pictures in my lounge. One is a village where my daughter lives that I'm very fond of. Another one is the village next to hers which is quite a nice picture.

Peggy: Are they photographs or paintings?

Dorothy: I don't put photographs on the wall. I've got photographs in frames.

Peggy: Well I wondered if it was a, you know, a photograph of the village.

Dorothy: No it's not a photograph, it's been painted.

Peggy: Oh it's a painting. Oh I'd be interested to see that.

Florrie: I have photographs, I like photographs and I've got a lot of those. I've got one more with the weddings and myself and the children on our golden wedding and in the other room I've got photographs of the grandchildren.

The predominant reaction among the 13 defensive individuals (mainly located on the centre or left hand side of axis in Figure 4.1) is one of dislike for both paintings, although some of them like the Turner and, significantly, two like the Hockney. This is the most mixed group regarding levels of cultural capital, although lower levels predominate. The range of defences is wide, being expressed in relation to the presumed knowledge of the interviewer, apparent mostly through interviewees' attempts to disguise lack of knowledge, an ethnic positioning of dis-identification, and an antagonistic reaction to a sense of exclusion.

Ali McKay is 31, white, married, with two toddlers, was brought up in rural areas and works as an agricultural sales representative. He shows

discomfort with the conversation, elaborating his comments as if under a school test:

It's not, I wouldn't say I dislike it, it's probably ... an oil painting I think from times gone by. It's – probably not what I would choose if I was walking into a gallery to buy. If anything it probably lacks detail. But other than that, I don't know how more elaborate you want [me] to be. I don't recognise it. [prompts interviewer to reassure him that this is not a test of knowledge].

Ronald Wright, a white gay man in his mid-30s who works as a quality manager in a law firm, likes the Turner, which he identifies. But he appears to feel he ought to know the Hockney, which he doesn't. The interviewer invites him to say what he thinks about the picture. Words and bodily gesture are charged with defensive behaviour, as he says he knows 'not a lot. Somebody ... is it Garry or Gavin or something like that?' [looking at the signature]. The interviewer says 'It's David Hockney, actually'. To which Ronald adds in a supposedly knowing manner which fills in for his discomfort: 'Yeah – for me I suppose he was an artist of his time, some people like it. I suppose the originals are worth more than the copies'. This kind of defensiveness in Ronald appears to express his own expectation of 'knowing a lot' about culture, which he clearly does, and his embarrassment, perhaps compounded by the gay identification of the painter, at not knowing a Hockney. The expression of embarrassment is clear in his comment about the price of copies compared to original paintings, which fills in for the anxious reparation of his shortcoming.

An interview is a relationship and the excerpts we use are parts of a much broader conversation. When the interviewer presents the Turner to Stafford Rathbone with the comment 'It's quite an old picture', this reflects the relationship developed between them from when he was first contacted for interview, when he commented that he 'didn't know anything about social studies'. Stafford is a 62-year old Afro-Caribbean living on his own. He works as a welder:

Stafford: I noticed that, because it's an old pirate ship isn't it?

Interviewer: Sort of picture that you would see in a museum or an art gallery or something. Would you go to a place like that to look at the pictures?

Stafford: If I'm around a place yes, but I wouldn't specifically go there. You know what I mean, but if I find myself in that vicinity I would probably go and have a look in to see what's happening, yeah ...

Interviewer: That is called [...] Here's another one. Second picture, what do you think about that?

Stafford: This is more modern art. Modern artist I think, contemporary art. It don't do much for me really.

Interviewer: It doesn't do much for you?

Stafford: No, it don't really do nothing for me.

A similar lack of knowledge and exclusion is apparent in Vasudev Rehman's comments. 'Yeah, I do like that, yeah. It's a sort of storm'. The interviewer asks

what he likes about it, and he says 'Nothing really except the background seems to be water, it looks to be a sort of Bangladesh part of the world'. He is asked if that is the sort of picture that he might have in his home, and he replies no. Asked if he would see it in a museum, he agrees he would and to this he adds a comment which shows he is measuring himself up against the interviewer by invoking a friend who (like the interviewer) was also a doctor, albeit of a different kind:

Vasudev: And it looks alright yeah, or if a friend ... has given for example I met a friend who belongs to Bangladesh, he has given me these sort of cards, he's a doctor, he's a doctorate as well, but he liked my ..., something in me ...

Interviewer: And the second picture?

Vasudev: This may be your modern art, this is the sort of house decoration isn't it? It's very difficult to appreciate this art for me. No I can't, don't take my opinion on that.

Vasudev does not watch television or films, and reads only books on health, yoga and his Sikh faith. However, he pursues interests in writing in his spare time and has attended writers' conferences in India and published in magazines in Gujarati. He is a widower with two grown-up children, a daughter working as a consultant in England and a son pursuing a writer's career in Japan. While he is aware of his high cultural capital, this relates to a national context different from the one he recognises in the painting, carrying some national connotations of cultural capital (see Chapter 13).

When the moderator for the focus group with unskilled and semiskilled workers suggests they discuss 'art', she is met with Den's reply that '... I don't think any of us are interested in art'. An animated conversation follows where senses of rejection and exclusion are evident:

Bif: It's pointless talking about art. ... It's too massive, it's too big. Because everybody has got their own individual life, and their individual personality about it. So we might as well move on.

Lyn: But there are paintings that we know are good.

Bif: No we don't. We know what we're *told* is good.

The engagements with the Turner and the Hockney indicate powerful tensions in the ways people conceive of visual art. At one extreme, confident amateurs appear at ease in passing judgement, and at the other the defensive individuals seem uncomfortable with a field they feel they don't belong to and which does not belong to them. In the middle, the relaxed consumers appropriate from the margins what they see fit, defining what they like on the basis of an aesthetic sense of the mundane connected to the personal. Engagement with visual art is prevalent, but the type of visual art engaged with differentiates individuals in social space, as does the manner of appropriation. This is also corroborated by our quantitative evidence.

The visual art field, unlike music, literature, cinema or television, is heavily dependent on institutional resources, making association with popular genres more difficult. If we take visual displays of various sorts into consideration – pictures, reproductions, posters and photographs – participation in visual culture is extensive. Also, when art goes into public spaces, like Anthony Gormley's recent works – *Angel of the North* (1995), the lonely figures of *Another Place* (2005–2006) in Crosby Sands, Liverpool, the *Waste Man* (2006) burnt in Margate, or the 31 life-size figures on London's skyline (2007) – participation greatly increases. Graffiti artists, sculpture parks – like Andy Goldsworthy's 2007 nature exhibition in Yorkshire – and corporate initiatives – like Homebase's, as documented by Rebecca Leach (2002) – are important initiatives for inquiring about the relationship between objects of art and individuals' relations to them in ways that challenge neat class divides. Since the nineteenth century, paintings have appealed to the masses (Taylor, 1999: 34) and class boundaries in art consumption have shifted more quickly in recent times. Access and social exclusion are fundamental issues because tastes are indeed not just born but developed as embodied practices that are also learnt, rather than being fixed by class. Yet, it remains the case that art is defined by where objects are displayed, whence their consecration, and these places are often controlled by individuals in privileged class positions (Grenfell and Hardy, 2007: 105). For instance, individuals in our elite sample demonstrate intense involvement in visual arts through financial support and membership of boards of trustee of arts organisations like Friends of the Tate, the Royal Academy, the National Trust, English Heritage and the Royal Society of the Arts, as well as participation in several national regulatory bodies and commissions. These connections span the governmental and corporate sectors. While the former assumes a traditional form of elite participation in the arts, the latter reflects what Chin-tao Wu (2002) refers to as the 'enterprise culture' emerging in the mid-1980s in the US and Britain, when businesses began actively to shape and frame the discourses and practices of contemporary culture in a ubiquitous manner, with their own collections, curators and art departments linking with museums and art galleries. Wu shows the engagement with the art world of high executives, educated in Oxbridge and Ivy League colleges, as part of the maintenance of a socio-economic network of relationships and a form of advertising to a more sophisticated social group through identification with their specific tastes. In a Bourdieusian sense, corporate involvement with art brings cultural capital to a company, enhancing its profile in the market, as well as the individuals who represent its power. Connections with the art world by means of one's occupational position are similarly clearly identified in axis 4 of our cultural map, where the lower-right quadrant shows wider involvement in artistic culture on the part of the sections of the professional-executive class.

To further consider different levels of involvement in art, we move on to explore participation in the institutional spaces of art and relations with genres and particular artists.

7.3 Consuming visual art

Our survey data show that more than half of the main sample (55 per cent) never go to an art gallery. Nearly 30 per cent report going once a year or less and only 15 per cent go several times a year or more. Patterns similar to these have been found in other studies and across Western societies (for Britain, Merriman, 1989; Selwood, 2002; for the US, DiMaggio *et al.*, 1979; National Endowment for the Arts, 1997; and for Australia, Bennett and Frow, 1991). It is acknowledged that, in Britain, the audience for visual art increased considerably in the last century as larger proportions of the population became more educated and elite-based art forms became more widely available (Taylor, 1999). Also, the explosion of a variety of cultural styles, particularly since the second half of the last century, has broken the monopoly of elite culture (Zolberg, 1992). Yet, our data show that the highly educated remain the majority of the audience for art galleries and museums. Of those who go to art galleries, 38 per cent have degrees compared with 13 per cent who have no educational qualifications, and the picture is similar for museums (Table 7.1). But, to understand how the organising structures of society correspond to individuals' practices in visual art, as one of the sites where general patterns of social stratification emerge, it is not sufficient to explore visits to museums and art galleries.

Respondents to the survey were asked how many original paintings or limited-edition prints by professional artists they had in their home. We saw from the interviews analysed in the previous section that these include 'art' of very different market values and we have no way of knowing, on the basis of the survey questionnaire, whether the artist is someone who casually participated in a local market fair to sell her or his watercolours, or if he or she is a

Table 7.1 Engagement with visual art, selected activities, university graduates and those with no educational qualification

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Total (%)</i>	<i>With degrees (a)</i>	<i>No educational qualification (b)</i>	<i>Ratio (a/b)</i>
Art galleries: go ever	45	38	13	3.04
Museum: go ever	63	32	17	1.86
Have paintings originals/ reproductions	39	31	19	1.67
Have seen works by named painters	89	25	24	1.03
<i>n</i>		366	419	

Source: Total $n = 1564$.

Notes

(a) Graduates as a proportion of all who engage in the particular activity.

(b) Those with no educational qualification as a proportion of all who engage in the particular activity.

celebrated painter. However, given the large number of respondents who own such works (39 per cent), it is likely that 'professional artist' was interpreted to encompass a broad category of painters and that the acquisition of 'professional' works is indeed much smaller than the numbers appearing in our survey. In the ethnic boost sample 24 per cent have at least one original painting or a limited-edition reproduction in their homes. The higher-status occupational groups tend to own greater numbers of original paintings. For instance, in the main sample, 31 per cent of the professional-executive class own four or more paintings, while only 11 per cent of those in semi-routine occupations own a similar number of paintings or reproductions. Confirming this trend, all our elite interviewees mention owning pictures, some of which we saw hanging in their offices or homes. The qualities and costs of paintings owned differ significantly, as exemplified by comments in qualitative interviews. For instance, when Margaret Staples, a relaxed consumer, justifies her dislike of the Turner, she places her art consumption firmly within the sphere of decorative taste in connection with her personal practice and effort:

Margaret: ... if I put that boat picture up there, like that wouldn't do anything for my kitchen ... I'm sort of trying to get things that would suit my kitchen you know and that does ... you know, you have [...] It took me about three or four days to get those pictures for in here [pointing to the wall]. Do you know what I mean, I just didn't go out and get the first thing that I saw.

The contrast with the effortless engagement of Beverley, a top finance director, or Cynthia, a politician and daughter of a successful artist, both of whom speak of intimate connections with key players in the art field, is striking:

Beverley: I'm not overly keen on modern art, I mean my husband, my current husband, is a fully trained artist at university so we have a lot of paintings at home.

Interviewer: That he did or he buys?

Beverley: That he did. I buy paintings –

Interviewer: You do, what sort of painting does he do? What sort of style?

Beverley: He prefers to do watercolours but he can do anything ... at various times people have ... commissioned him to do something, we have all kinds of different things in the house.

Interviewer: And what sort of paintings do you buy?

Beverley: I have some paintings that I buy, a chap called [name] – a-u-h-m, he lives locally but ... he sells well all over the UK and he's a friend of ours ... I obviously like the paintings but that's the other reason why we've bought them.

Interviewer: What's his style?

Beverley: His style is naive.[...]

Interviewer: Is he the only one or is there any other –

Beverley: ... My brother who died was very artistic as well and I have some of his work ... that was exhibited. [...] we also have a good friend, [name] [...] who's a sculptor so we have some of her wall hangings ... as well.

Cynthia: A great friend who was in the art world, ... she was a nineteenth-century expert and through her, I got to like [name] ... and we've got one picture of his and that has gone up mad in value as you can imagine, wonderful. [...] But the ones I really really like, Turner [...] he was actually a friend of my father's and I was taken to see his studios and things like that and I've got quite a lot of not original [inaudible] tiny little thing when he scribbled something to my father, but that's about all.

Women and men own similar numbers of paintings. This, however, differs slightly among the minority ethnic groups where 26 per cent of men and 20 per cent of women own at least one painting. This is probably a consequence of the relatively greater financial independence of white women.

The correlation between education and ownership of original paintings is very strong: 30 per cent of those with degrees, against 10 per cent of those with no educational qualification, own four or more original paintings. The correlation with age is also strong, with those between 45 and 74 being the majority of owners of paintings, at a proportion nearly twice as large as that among the younger age group. However, the trend is the inverse of this among minority ethnic groups, where the younger members of the sample are more likely to own paintings. (Eighteen per cent of those aged between 18 and 24 in the ethnic boost sample own four to six paintings compared to 12 per cent in the main file sample.) This might be because the ownership of paintings acts as a factor of social integration for a younger minority-ethnic generation, who may identify more strongly with the art that is available on the British market. Danielle Kane (2004) suggests that for individuals from different cultures to sustain relationships with significant others, like friends, may require the ability to appreciate culture that is not immediately accessible. This extra effort to develop social relationships may encourage a willingness also to make an extra effort in appreciating culture. Hence, being in a mixed field, such as a minority ethnic group in British society, may increase the desire for closeness to challenging cultural material and the development of wider cultural appreciation among those with the capacities to do so.

The distribution of ownership of original paintings among the four main ethnic groups in the main sample shows that those who classify themselves as 'white other' were the largest group of owners of four or more paintings (36 per cent), followed by the group of 'white English' (17 per cent) and 'white-other British/Irish' (15 per cent), with 'other origin' having the smallest ownership of between four or more paintings (9 per cent). As we shall see in Chapter 13, those included in the 'white other' category are the best educated and occupationally the highest placed, and the highest earners, of all the ethnic groups. Their high

ownership of paintings thus reflects their high levels of cultural and economic capital. Their ownership of art might reflect the role works of art can play as a means of carrying memory during geographical mobility, as well as an investment in portable assets. We have seen that interviewees often associate place of origin in comments about their engagement with the pictures we selected for discussion.

7.4 Appreciating visual art

Our investigation of the appreciation of visual culture focused on a range of types of visual art and artists of varying degrees of 'certified legitimacy'. The range of choices in the survey centred on paintings. This is partly because of the predominance of paintings among the types of art listed in the questionnaire – performance art, landscapes, Renaissance art, still lifes, portraits, modern art and Impressionism. The named artists we asked about – Pablo Picasso, Vincent Van Gogh, Frida Kahlo, L. S. Lowry, Andy Warhol, J. M. W. Turner and Tracy Emin – are also known mostly for their paintings, except for Emin who is, arguably, best known for her 'Bed' installation for the Turner Prize at the Tate Gallery in 1999.

Bourdieu (1984) claims that, together with music, painting is one of the most legitimate areas of culture. However, within the field of painting, as within the field of music or literature, a hierarchy exists through which certain genres or certain works are associated with differences in social status. Often these are historical differences derived from the popularisation (devaluation) of the works across time, through which 'highbrow' works come to be re-classified as 'middlebrow' or vice versa.

Social trajectory has a powerful relationship with educational attainment and this correlates very strongly with engagement in the field of the visual arts, as we saw for some of the socio-economic contours of engagement with art outlined above. But education also relates to other variables, including economic capital. Demographics confirm the polarisation of the social world in the field of visual art. Differences in social worlds relate to different engagements with the art. For example, as we saw above, Beverley and Cynthia, coming from higher occupational classes, appropriate consecrated original art works as personal objects connected to their life histories, while Margaret, among those with less economic and social capital, displays original art works of lower quality: acquired in the local market, to fit a kitchen decoration. Although ownership of original paintings and reproductions is fairly extensive, marked social divisions are connected to it. However, if our survey data do not allow us to distinguish clearly the sorts of art owned, an examination of engagements with particular types of art throws interesting light on these questions.

The exploration of tastes for different types of art among the main sample shows a great predilection for landscapes (47 per cent). Impressionism, modern art, portraits and performance art are each preferred by less than 10 per cent of the sample. But dislikes are also highly significant as markers of taste in visual art, as we also saw from the qualitative interviews and focus groups. The type

Table 7.2 Liking and disliking genres of art (percentages)

<i>Type of art</i>	<i>Like the most</i>	<i>Like the least</i>
Performance	8	13
Landscapes	47	6
Renaissance	4	5
Still lifes	5	10
Portraits	9	5
Modern	9	40
Impressionism	9	12
None/don't know	9	10
Total (%)	100	101

Source: Total $n = 1560$.

of art most disliked by far is modern art (40 per cent), and more people dislike than like performance art, Impressionism and still lifes. There is also a significant proportion of people who have no engagement with visual art, as identified by those who neither like nor dislike, or do not know whether they like or dislike, any of the types listed – much higher, it is important to note, than for any other field (Table 7.2). Those who are not engaged with any of the visual art types listed in the survey are mostly men, somewhat younger and not well educated.

Performance art is somewhat more attractive to women, as well as to the younger and non-white, and it is liked more by those with higher educational levels. Landscape art is liked mostly by men and by older people. It is a strong preference found in all occupational classes, yet the lowest preference is found among the higher professional occupations. Renaissance art is liked more by women than by men and more by older people. Those who are white but not from Britain like it four times more than those in the 'white English' category. Liking Renaissance art is high for those with higher educational qualifications, and respondents with degrees like it nearly five times more than those with no qualification. Still life paintings are liked more by women and younger respondents. Portraits, following the general pattern, are also liked most by women and the somewhat younger respondents. The better educated are the least likely to like portraits. Women like modern art more than do men, at a ratio of more than 1.5. This is the type of art liked the most by the youngest respondents. There are also more women than men who like Impressionism, and this is preferred by somewhat older people. Those with higher educational levels like Impressionism much more than do those with no qualifications (see Silva, 2006, table 2).

To investigate knowledge and participation in visual art and further explore taste, we considered attendance at art galleries in relation to type of art liked the most. We assume that art galleries would normally be understood to include public art galleries from the nineteenth century, modern art museums like Tate Britain and Tate Modern, as well as some of the out-of-London venues, and contemporary art spaces. Of course, commercial galleries are also included in this category, and these have increased significantly, particularly in

Table 7.3 Type of art liked the most and art gallery attendance (percentages by row)

Frequency type	Once a month	Several times a year	Once year or less	Never	n
Performance art	2	14	31	54	129
Landscapes	2	10	28	61	738
Renaissance	6	44	34	16	68
Still lifes	2	4	34	60	70
Portraits	1	10	26	62	136
Modern art	9	13	32	47	142
Impressionism	6	29	47	18	146
None of these	–	1	12	87	132
Don't know	–	–	–	100	3
Total	3	13	29	55	1564

London, with 15 per cent growth between 1995 and 2005 (*The Guardian G2*, 2005, October 21).

To re-cap, 55 per cent never go to an art gallery, nearly 30 per cent go once a year or more and 13 per cent go several times a year. Interestingly, attendance appears clearly correlated with taste (see Table 7.3). Those who like Renaissance art (4 per cent) and Impressionism (9 per cent) are the most assiduous art gallery visitors. Most of those who like these types of art are actively engaged in viewing art. This resonates with the historical developments of the British art field, where the large investment in Impressionist art on the part of the Tate Gallery in its early years played a key role in the formation of the professional middle classes in Britain. Brendon Taylor (1999) reports that, between its opening in 1897 and its extension in 1926, the Tate Gallery served as the primary artistic site, providing a means for the meritocratic professional middle classes to distance themselves from the working classes, while also claiming cultural leadership and distinctiveness *vis-à-vis* the earlier hegemonic fractions of the English aristocracy. Via the influence of the Tate Gallery, European modernism and French Impressionism, in particular, were adopted as key vehicles of social differentiation. Grenfell and Hardy (2007) show that current connections between art and class are organized around this history, where Impressionism plays a key role. This historicity takes the form of a division between a 'rear-garde' (Titian, Michaelangelo, Poussin, Gericault, Goya) representing a connection between class and art deeply rooted in tradition, and a consecrated *avant-garde* consisting of representatives of European modernism (Van Gogh, Monet, Bonnat, Picasso, Mondrian, Duchamp), and two newer formations: an American *avant-garde* (Hopper, Pollock, Rothko, Twombly, Koons, and Basquiat) and a recent British *avant-garde* (Sickert, Spencer, Moore, Hockney, Bacon, Gilbert and George, and Hirst). It is perhaps unsurprising that, among the elite, as among the other interviewees, there is not much liking for the British *avant-garde*, as the small appreciation for the Hockney demonstrates, while greater ease is found with the Turner, a more comfortable taste within the overall educational and social trajectories of the British

middle classes. As Table 7.3 suggests, taste and gallery visiting affect one another; the largest proportion of people who never go to art galleries – in order of non-engagement – are found amongst those who like portraits, landscapes, still lifes and performance art.

We also asked about different sorts of engagement with the works of particular painters. We assumed that knowledge of a painter would refer to having seen (either in printed reproductions, on television, or via the Internet) or having heard of his or her works. Participation would imply having seen some of her or his original works. Taste would be expressed by indicating a liking or dislike for the work that was seen. There are limitations in these assumptions since, for example, lack of participation may be a result of a dislike unconnected to an active engagement with the works of the painter. Someone who dislikes Mexican art *tout court* could simply decide she did not like Frida Kahlo's works without ever having seen any of them; or, that having heard a television discussion about Tracy Emin's *Bed*, would come to the conclusion he disliked her works. The works of more established painters are less likely to suffer from judgements of these sorts. Because we chose to explore taste in relation to a variety of visual art styles, we need to account for the significant effect that different levels of legitimacy of the painters may have on the views expressed by respondents. Our concern is that legitimate taste – for Van Gogh, Picasso and Turner – is underpinned, to a large extent, by the established system of aesthetic classification. It is along these lines that the widespread positive appeal of the works of Van Gogh, for instance, can be analysed. They have been appropriated by everyone. Yet, it is worth investigating possible differences.

Have those who like landscape art the most seen Turner's works? Have those who like modern art the most seen the works of Picasso, or Andy Warhol, or Frida Kahlo, for instance? How is the taste for a type of art related to an active engagement with it, as indicated by having seen the works of a painter representative of that type? The correlation between preferred type of art and participation is low, yet coherent when it is positively expressed: preference for landscape art and engagement with the works by Turner and Picasso are demonstrated, as well as a connection between liking modern art and knowing and liking Kahlo, Emin and Warhol, for example (see more detailed analysis in Silva, 2006). It also suggests that preference for a type of art does not restrict participation to that type, but that certain types – like Impressionism – may, as is evident from our interviews, be used as a label to refer loosely and broadly to non-representational rather than realistic painting. A 'preference' is indeed not a dedicated taste choice. It is worth noting a degree of tension between the fit of genres and artists. The popularity of Van Gogh and Turner appears at odds with not many people liking Impressionism, given that their influence on Impressionism is widely acknowledged and that they are indeed commonly labelled Impressionist. This is perhaps because the findings reported in Table 7.3 measure responses to 'linguistic categories' more than to art works. We might thus have expected, had we included them in our survey, that Leonardo's *Mona Lisa* or Michelangelo's *Last Judgement* might have scored very highly, even though the category of 'Renaissance art' elicits a low score. There is

also some tension between the fit of a particular painting and the artist's *oeuvre*, as detected in the appreciation of the Turner and the Hockney paintings we discussed with interviewees.

7.5 Conclusion

In this chapter we have looked at how individuals engage with visual art in terms of knowledge, taste and participation. Disagreements about taste are found to be class based but other differences, particularly those of gender, age and ethnicity, intersect and at times change the inflections of class. Sometimes the classification fits neatly with material possession or the ability to own art. A marked social division in relations to art institutions, with only a few boasting personal connections with the visual art world, confirms the distinctive properties of the visual art field as the most exclusive of all the areas of cultural practice that we explored.

The differentiations that we found between confident amateurs, relaxed consumers and defensive individuals relate to taste, knowledge and participation taken together. These orientations towards art proceed from the perspective of the individual in social space and their inclination to engage in visual art in ways that reflect their social position, their knowledge of the art field, personal reactions and biographical considerations.

This classification contrasts with that of Bourdieu who identified three main sorts of relationships to art objects, museums and art galleries (Bourdieu and Darbel, 1991). First, there are those who buy art. They are rich in economic capital and often also possess high levels of cultural capital. Second, there are those who know about art. They are rich in cultural capital but generally lack the means to acquire art. This group constitutes the bulk of visitors to museums and art galleries, and also tends to include buyers of reproductions of art. A third group is constituted by those who do not engage with art or visit museums or art galleries. His classification arose from work on museums, art galleries and their visitors, where there is evidence of connections between social class, levels of education and social origin and an individual's experience of the culture of visual art. For the British, material position has a clear link with appropriation of art, or the potential ability to appropriate art, among the confident amateurs, but it is not at all clear among the relaxed consumers or defensive individuals. Greater knowledge is exhibited by the confident amateurs and also some of the defensive individuals, while visits to art galleries and museums are the province of the confident amateur group and are irrelevant to the other two groups.

Our classification transcends the binary antinomy of 'function' and 'form' that characterised Bourdieu's 'take' on Kantian aesthetics in *Distinction*. Function and form intermingle in varied ways in the different systems of evaluation that our research participants bring to bear on their engagements with visual art according to the practical exigencies of their positions in social space, their relation to cosmopolitan orientations, questions of national belongingness, subcultural relevance or other considerations. Aesthetic orientations are more complex in

contemporary Britain than those dividing the disinterestedness of the bourgeois from the necessities of the working class.

Visual art remains a strong field of classification of social position. Engagement with visual art, as part of a broad visual culture, is widespread, the availability of art substantial, and access increasingly available. Yet, core participation by better-off groups remains resilient, even though fissures and cleavages occur across group boundaries. The grip of legitimate culture remains firm. This is partly a matter of being able to afford to own works of art, the more prestigious of which are comparatively expensive. Acquiring objective cultural capital in this field, through possession, is for a minority. It is also evident in the tendency for the more highly educated middle class, and especially the elite, to be far more likely to visit art galleries and have views about the quality of art. They, and their children, are disproportionately likely to develop a knowledge and appreciation that serves to increase institutional cultural capital. Probably some older attitudes have atrophied – witness the relative ease with which relaxed consumers respond to questioning. Yet, at the same time, the existence of a group of defensive individuals indicates that art still causes discomfort for some. Though we did not analyse the field of music in the same manner, we found few comparable signs of defensiveness. Art remains a relatively exclusive field.

8 Contrasting dynamics of distinction

The media field

8.1 Introduction

It is widely agreed that the growth of broadcasting media since *Distinction* was published has generated a range of shared tastes and cultural practices that is inconsistent with Bourdieu's depiction of sharply polarised class cultures. Bourdieu's own account might even have been different had he paid adequate attention to the role of broadcasting media in mid-1960s France. He asked only two questions exploring radio and television programme choices. Although the ownership of radio sets in France was widespread at the time, he does not directly address his findings relating to radio, tending to subsume these in his more general discussions of musical tastes. Television also grew from being a relatively restricted aspect of French cultural life to a mass medium during the period (1963–1968) in which the fieldwork for *Distinction* was conducted: while only 13 per cent of French households owned television sets in 1960, this had grown to 52 per cent by 1967 (Lahire, 2004: 628). Again, though, Bourdieu made little use of his findings relating to television preferences and converted his one extended discussion of television into a vehicle for another purpose by interpreting working-class resistance to formalist experiments in television as a proxy for working-class attitudes to formal innovations in modern art (Bourdieu, 1984: 33).

Watching television and cinema-going are, along with reading a daily newspaper, among the most widely practised and broadly shared cultural activities across both of our samples. Both certainly correlate less strongly with class than do music, reading or visual art. Looking again at our cultural map, discussed in Chapter 3, we can see that television and film do not figure significantly on the first axis (see Figure 3.1), the one that is most clearly connected to occupational class and level of education, and thus the mutually supportive relations between economic and cultural capital that their parallel trajectories imply. The only items from the media field appearing on the left hand of this axis are liking soap opera, watching television for more than 5 hours per day, liking westerns and not going to the cinema; and the only items on the right are watching television less than an hour per day, going to the cinema either occasionally or frequently and liking literary adaptations and costume dramas. We also noted that many television genres – police or detective shows, quizzes and game shows, films on television, nature and history

documentaries, and cookery, home decoration or gardening programmes – do not contribute to significant differentiation along any of our axes, either because they are generally liked or because they do not have a particularly marked association with any specific social group.

The situation is quite different with the second axis, which, reading from top to bottom (see Figure 3.2), is organised primarily in terms of ascending age related to tastes for contemporary (younger) and established (older) genres and practices. Here, film and television tastes are heavily represented, more so than levels of participation, in a more-or-less symmetrical set of oppositions:

Axis 2: Top – like horror films, science fiction films, and action, thriller and adventure movies; dislike literary adaptations and costume dramas; go to the cinema occasionally; like sports TV and comedy; dislike arts TV programmes.

Axis 2: Bottom – dislike horror films; like musicals, and literary adaptations and costume dramas; dislike science-fiction films; not go to the cinema; dislike reality TV; like TV news and current affairs, and nature and history documentaries.

A similarly pronounced and, again, symmetrical set of oppositions is clear in relation to the third axis (see Figure 3.3), which represents divisions organised primarily in terms of gender, with women predominating in the top section of the graph and men in the bottom section:

Axis 3: Top – like romance and comedy films; not like war films, westerns, horror and science fiction films; like soap operas and TV drama; not like TV nature and history documentaries, news and current affairs, and sports TV.

Axis 3: Bottom – like action thriller and adventure movies, science-fiction films, and westerns; not like Bollywood, romance films and film musicals; not go to the cinema; like TV news and current affairs, nature and history documentaries, sports TV; not like soaps and reality TV.

Although relatively weakly marked in class terms, then, film and television choices are divided quite sharply in terms of both age and gender. The challenge, however, is not simply to juxtapose these age- and gender-based divisions to those organised in terms of class but to investigate how age, class and gender are articulated in relation to one another in the context of the changing dynamics of distinction that characterise their relations to the media field.

To engage with these matters adequately requires that we take account of the specific qualities of film and television, and the distinctive places they occupy relative to one another and to other cultural practices. Georgina Born (2003) has touched on these matters in noting that Bourdieu's assumption that correlations can be established between hermetically separate genres on the one hand, and distinct class positions on the other, does not work well for television owing to the inherently trans- or inter-generic nature of the television text. In our survey, genre choices tend to cluster into closely related groups: liking soap operas, reality television, variety programmes and chat shows tend to go together, as do

preferences for news and current affairs programmes, documentaries and sports programmes. Dislikes, too, tend to be organised in clusters: those who like soap operas tend to dislike news and current affairs programmes, documentaries, arts and sports programmes, and watching films on television.¹ Both film and television are also characterised by their weak relations to the scholarly and other institutions that organise relations of legitimacy in the cultural field. This is particularly true of television. Although media studies academics have, from the 1980s, devoted some effort to identifying criteria for judgement that might provide a basis for a television aesthetic that can match the protocols for judgement that have been developed in relation to film studies or art and literature (Jacobs, 2001; Geraghty, 2003; Bjarkman, 2004), and despite media studies having grown significantly as an area of study at both secondary and tertiary level (it was one of the ten fastest growing subjects at tertiary level in 2006), neither film nor television studies has escaped the tag of 'mickey mouse' studies. Nonetheless, their growth is significant,² particularly in relation to the younger members of our sample, and the organisation of relations of distinction whose provenance and operation are limited to relatively localised areas in the social space of lifestyles.

Although he does not deal with television adequately in *Distinction*,³ Bourdieu's remarks on the role of the 'middle-ground arts', such as cinema, jazz, strip cartoons, science fiction and detective stories, are particularly helpful here. He argues that these arts recruit significant investments of time and energy on the part of those who have not yet entirely succeeded in converting their cultural capital into educational capital or whose relationship to legitimate culture is uneasy. Although 'disdained or neglected by the big holders of educational capital', such arts 'offer a refuge or a revenge to those who, by appropriating them, secure the best return on their cultural capital (especially if it is not fully recognised scholastically) while, at the same time taking credit for contesting the established hierarchy of legitimacies and profits' (Bourdieu, 1984: 87). Jeremy Sconce (1995), applying this perspective to the role that parodic readings of 'trash' films culled from a range of genres (horror, science fiction, pornography) play in relation to the educational, cultural and social trajectories of US college graduates, relates it to another telling remark of Bourdieu's: that it is mostly cultural forms occupying less secure or liminal positions, rather than those that are most obviously of a high or low legitimacy, which are most commonly invoked in the struggles for distinction between those groups which are closest to each other in social space. The case he cites is Bourdieu's analysis, in *Distinction*, of popular song: rejected with disgust and *en bloc* by employers and professionals, but an important site for fine-grained distinctions between and within the intermediate and working classes.

The roles of film and television are best viewed in this light. Although judgements of taste for these are not strongly implicated in the organisation of the cultural capital, level of education and occupational class nexus governing axis 1 of the space of lifestyles, they are often very significantly involved in the organisation of more local distinctions, which fall below the threshold of visibility

of such analysis. Hence, a more fine-grained analysis is called for to accord these more localised distinctions their proper place. This includes the need to distinguish the positions of television and cinema in these processes, for, while there are evident points of similarity between them as increasingly overlapping fields of both production and consumption, they are also distinct in many respects.

8.2 The different class registers of television and cinema

We have already noted that the strongest class divisions in the media field concern levels of participation. Gender is almost entirely inconsequential here in relation to both film and television, while ethnicity has a strong bearing on cinema attendance: over 40 per cent of both the Indian and Pakistani members of the ethnic boost sample go to the cinema once a month or more, compared to only 18 per cent of the main sample. While not so marked as this, class does affect the extent of cinema-going and television viewing, albeit in different ways. In the case of cinema, regularity of participation increases with class position: 67 per cent of the professional-executive class attend several times a year or more compared to 50 per cent of the intermediate classes and 42 per cent of the working classes. In the case of television, however, perhaps the most distinctive aspect of the viewing practices of the professional-executive class is the low level of participation its members report relative to the two other classes: 24 per cent report watching less than one hour on weekdays compared to 10 per cent of the working class, while only 19 per cent watch five hours or more on weekend days compared to 30 per cent of the intermediate classes and 43 per cent of the working class. Education operates similarly: those with a university education are about three times as likely (58 per cent) to watch sparingly than are those with no educational qualifications (21 per cent).

A recurrent theme of our interviews with business, political and public service elites is the emphasis they place on how little they watch television. This is attributed to lack of time, owing to professional obligations involving evening or weekend commitments. But such claims also serve to articulate a distinction between purposive viewing as opposed to watching whatever happens to be on in ways that rehearse the long-established division between attentive viewing that is subject to the exercise of the will and the allegedly distracted viewer of popular entertainment media. Jonathan Crary (2001) has offered the most extensive and probing discussion of this division, particularly in its late-nineteenth-century formation. However, the division has a longer history that has, if not its origins, then an important staging-post in Kant's account of the aesthetic, in which true judgement is distinguished from the sensate pleasures of the merely agreeable precisely by virtue of its ability to rise above and exercise dominion over those pleasures (Kant, 1985). This is, indeed, arguably a more important aspect of the Kantian legacy than the opposition between the disinterestedness of the 'pure' aesthetic and the culture of the necessary upon which Bourdieu dwelled so much. Certainly, a good case can be made for its having had a more lasting impact on the education system in Britain than the culture of disinterestedness.

Translated, via John Stuart Mill, into the role of will in the formation of character, and thence, via Mill's protégé, Alexander Bain, into an account of the psychic economy of the individual as one governed by an incessant struggle between 'the habitual control of Attention, as against the diversions caused by outward objects' (Bain, 1859: 505), that is, the lure of the senses, training of the will constituted an important component of state education philosophy and practice well into the twentieth century (Roberts, 2004).

We can hear echoes of this aspect of the Kantian legacy in Timothy, one of our elite interviewees, when he confesses:

I think it's a kind of discipline inside me, it's a bit naughty to watch television before six o'clock. But I listen to the *World at One* on Radio Four if I'm in at lunchtime.

We hear them too in the reflections of Alistair, the owner, by inheritance, of a country estate, who is at some pains to make it clear that he and his wife 'are not addicts at all' and that, when they watch television, it will usually be to watch for a specific purpose. But it was the fact of *not* watching much that he dwells on most:

But I wouldn't class ourselves as big television watchers. We watch it when it sort of suits us and if there's something that we think might be quite interesting is on. We watch a little bit of, sometimes a little bit of sport, things like Wimbledon Fortnight we particularly enjoy. If the local football team is playing I might well watch that. But I don't watch, we don't watch a lot of television.⁴

Like many of the men in our elite sample, Alistair identifies sport as one of his favourite types of television, but in ways which suggest this is not really watching television as it is *the sport* they are interested in, *not* television, as if they were *watching sport through television* rather than actually *watching television*. This sense of valuing television for its capacity to offer a window on to other worlds, rather than a deep immersion in any of television's fictional or entertainment genres, is a common thread in these interviews. We see it in Colin, a retired senior civil servant, who, apart from watching films on television, only watches programmes – history documentaries, the news, *Horizon*, Open University programmes, arts programmes, and televised opera – that serve this purpose. His channel preferences are also consistently for BBC channels in both the terrestrial and digital environments. This is true for our elite sample as a whole and also in line with the pattern for our main sample, where preferences for both BBC channels and for Channel 4 increase consistently with ascending class position in contrast to the pattern for ITV and Channel 5.

While the influence of class on genre preferences is less pronounced, the positive tastes of the professional-executive class are most distinct from those of the intermediate and working classes, particularly the latter, for those genres – news, current affairs, and documentaries – which have a strong 'windows onto worlds'

Table 8.1 Class position and television genre preference (column per cent)

Television genres	Working class	Intermediate	Professional-executive class	n
News/current	13	17	22	243
Comedy/sitcom	10	11	11	158
Police/detective	8	5	7	101
Quiz/game shows	3	3	3	46
Documentaries	11	11	13	171
Sport	13	15	11	195
Arts programmes	0.1	1	1	9
Films	9	9	6	128
Variety	1	1	1	14
Drama	9	8	8	126
Reality TV	1	1	2	18
Soap operas	18	15	10	225
Cookery/garden/DIY	4	4	4	64
Other/none/no TV	1	1	3	22
n*	710	449	361	1520

* Class totals are less than sample totals for technical reasons concerning the construction of our three-class model. These are explained in Chapter 10.

signature (Table 8.1). The ratio of class difference here is greatest for arts programmes, but the numbers here are so small as to make this a more-or-less inconsequential aspect of television viewing so far as relations of distinction are concerned. These are much more likely to manifest themselves in the adoption of a pedagogic relation to television, treating it as a resource for self-education or self-improvement linked to the forms of self-mastery associated with *not* watching television.

Euan, a professional working in the heritage industry, thus echoes aspects of Alistair's and Colin's relations to television. Asked why he likes to watch nature and history documentaries, he replies:

I can't watch comedy and sitcoms because I don't think that I'm learning anything from it. I like to think that I'm gaining something which is what's quite nice about history and documentaries, news and current affairs. I think there's so many people that have no idea what's going on in the world, it's a travesty really, you know we should pay more attention to these sorts of things.

When asked whether he ever watches television purely for the purposes of relaxation, Euan denies this: 'I don't, no, I only tend to put it on if I've seen there's something advertised I want to watch. I don't have it on as background, which some people do, I can't – sometimes I put it on for the dog when I go out'.

There are complex issues here concerning how the pedagogic value of television contrasts with the values of escapism or entertainment; how these different values

are articulated in terms of a preference for 'realism' in television; and how they connect to age and gender as well as to class (see also the discussion in Chapter 4). We shall return to these questions. For now, though, it is important to note that a pedagogic relation to television is most frequently defined in opposition to the two most strongly disliked genres – reality television and soap operas, disliked by 27 per cent and 17 per cent of the main sample, respectively. Whereas there is little variation in the class distribution of likes for reality television, aversion to this and to soap operas is especially pronounced among the professional-executive class. These are both genres that immerse their viewers in the 'made-up' worlds of television rather than leading them out beyond television into other worlds, and they both generate the strongest condemnations from our interviewees. This is not to say that they lack their champions, particularly among women who are much more avid soap fans than men. For many women, it is the very everydayness of soaps that is the source of a distinctive ethical appeal in view of the opportunity this offers for rehearsing the familiar dilemmas of everyday life and experience. For Poppy, a 47 year-old social worker:

I like the real life issues they bring up, I do, because it happens to us all. And I can relate with some of them what's happening ... if you've been through that experience yourself, yeah, and a few of them I have, and no doubt everybody else has.

Cherie, a professional in the heritage industry, also likes soaps, but for different reasons, singling out the organisation of their plot-lines, the development of characters and the quality of the writing as the reasons for a more formal and distanced appreciation.

There is, however, little liking for the genre among the women members of our elite sample. For Caroline, from a working-class background in the East End of London, but who had become a prominent political figure through her roles in trade unions and the Labour Party, soaps are to be avoided in view of their potential to corrupt and degrade. Judging the constant shouting and rowing between its main characters as setting unacceptable standards of behaviour, she tells us that one of her daughters 'won't let her girls watch it anymore because she says they pick up such awful bad habits and ways of speaking to people that it's not nice'. Reality television evokes similarly strong antagonism on the part of David, a Cambridge-educated engineer who had progressed through a succession of senior manager roles to become CEO of a major international company:

I'll walk out of the room if my son has got Big Brother on or any of these bloody things where they vote for people who then get kicked off. I literally you know, walk out of the room and go read a book or get away from it, I can't handle it, right. I hate them, right with a vengeance.

This opposition to reality television is not, however, universal among the members of our elite sample. Keith, a member of the board of directors of a national

family-run retail business, educated at Eton and, subsequently, at universities in Scotland and the United States, and with widespread cultural interests in the arts and theatre, finds reality television 'quite extraordinary' and 'absorbing'. Clearly a little perplexed as to why this should be so, he justifies his interest in this genre as a form of learning, thus bringing it into line with his other television interests which have a strong documentary and current affairs accent.

To summarise, then, class proves most salient in relation to channel preferences and the amount of television watched. *Not* watching television functions as a testimony to the agency of will, and its ability to resist and to discipline the lure of idle enjoyment. This carries over into different modes of relating to television with the preferences of the professional-executive class often being organised in terms of a distinction between genres, which are accorded a strong pedagogic role in leading the viewer into an intellectual engagement with the real world beyond television and those genres that immerse the viewer in television's own made-up or fabricated worlds.

Perhaps the most striking aspect of the distribution of first preferences for film genres is the more-or-less identical degree of interest across the classes in the most popular genre – action, thriller and adventure movies (see Table 8.2). Interviews suggest that the reasons for liking these films do not differ much across these classes: formal criteria are rarely, if ever, invoked to account for this preference, which is, instead, typically expressed in terms of the entertainment

Table 8.2 Class position and film genre preference (column percentage)

<i>Film type</i>	<i>Working class</i>	<i>Intermediate</i>	<i>Professional-executive class</i>	<i>n*</i>
Action, thrillers	28	27	27	417
Alternative/arts	1	1	6	31
Bollywood	1	0.4	1	11
Cartoons	1	1	0	8
Comedy	17	15	17	247
Costume dramas	6	9	13	129
Crime	3	4	5	57
Documentary	7	7	5	100
Fantasy	0.4	2	3	24
Film noir	0	0.2	1	6
Horror	6	4	3	66
Musicals	7	5	2	79
Romance	6	10	5	107
Science fiction	7	6	7	96
War films	4	4	1	48
Westerns	6	2	3	66
None/other	2	2	1	28
<i>n</i>	710	449	361	1520

* Class totals are less than sample totals for technical reasons concerning the construction of our three-class model. These are explained in Chapter 10.

value and opportunity for escapism that such films offer. Equally notable, the film genres that register the most strongly differentiated rates of class response are those most closely identified with traditional 'arts' or 'high culture' conceptions of cinema: alternative and arts cinema, which clearly plays a more important role for the professional-executive class (at 6 per cent) than do arts television programmes (at 1 per cent); costume dramas and literary adaptations, the signature genres of British 'quality' films; and, albeit on a much smaller scale, *film noir*. These, together with science fiction, are also the genres that are most strongly liked by those who have university qualifications. By contrast, documentary film recruits its strongest level of interest from those with no educational qualifications, alongside war movies, musicals, westerns and romances, just as it is more popular with the working and intermediate classes than with the professional-executive class. This suggests that the pedagogic relationship to television we saw in the case of the informational genres of news and current affairs and documentary programmes does not have the same value in relation to film choice, although, as we shall see, questions of realism do play a strong role in organising different responses to horror, romance and war movies when age and gender are taken into account.

As we have seen, however, class has a stronger influence on cinema attendance. Economic considerations play some role here. These are central to the reasons given by the members of the low-paid women's and benefit claimants' groups for their low rates of cinema-going, citing, in addition to ticket costs, the expense of either child care or – if accompanied by their children – of drinks and sweets as beyond the reach of their weekly incomes. Cost is also a central explanation for the rare attendance of the skilled and semi-skilled manual workers, with ticket prices being seen as 'rip-offs' compared to video or DVD rental charges, or simply pirating these. More tellingly, the skilled workers also express a lack of comfort with the managed space of the cinema – with its prohibitions on eating, drinking and chatting – compared to the more relaxed and informal atmosphere of home viewing.

However, we verge here on the role of cultural factors, which, given that only 6 per cent of the working classes cite cost as a reason for not going to the cinema, are likely to play a greater role in accounting for the 25 per cent range of class variation in cinema attendance noted earlier. This is particularly true of the attitudes toward the different types of venue – 'popular', 'mainstream' or 'multiplex' cinemas and 'art-houses' – that are evident in our focus-group discussions. For Pete, an Afro-Caribbean marketing manager, and Cynthia, a retired medical secretary, living close to a specialist arts cinema offers both access to their preferred genres (Pete has a preference for American independent cinema; Cynthia prefers Ealing comedies and literary adaptations) and an amenable venue. Joan, a retired librarian, agrees with this assessment, commenting that her local arts cinema is 'a comfortable, cosy place to go to. And there is somebody you know there usually'. For young professionals working in the cultural sector, distinctions between types of venue merge with the types of films being watched, with 'art-house' films being interpreted as a more cerebral or authentic form of participation than the

mainstream films associated with multiplex cinemas. The following exchange, between a theatre marketing officer, Zara, and Tina, a contemporary art gallery education officer, is a good example:

Zara: I think this thing the expectation is that you go to the Gateway⁵ you expect to be challenged by what you see on the screen, whereas if you go to Showcase or Warner's, just – I don't expect to be challenged.

Tina: It's mainstream.

However, this ability to move between these different types of venue is not spread evenly across all classes. The following exchange between the members of the skilled manual workers focus group – Kate, a care-home nurse; Daz a telesales assistant; Jess, a bank computer operator; Steve, a satellite television engineer; Chas, a plumber; and Wayne, a window-fitter, all of them in their twenties – expresses a sense of the art-house space as remote in terms of both age and class:

Kate: [laughing] I don't know. Can you imagine Wayne phoning everybody up and saying, 'Come to the arts cinema?' We'd all laugh our heads off. [General laughter]

Moderator: Having said that, that everybody would laugh their heads off if Wayne did this, what sort of people do you think go? In general?

Kate: People with interests.

Daz: I reckon people who've got something to do with it.

Chas: Yes, yes.

Jess: That they are going to benefit from it and stuff.

Wayne: Like they are doing it for courses and stuff.

Moderator: So they are doing it for a purpose?

Steve: Yeah. People who are, well, its not just their leisure time. They are actually doing something. It probably is their interests but that's what they're doing on a course as well.

Kev: I think a lot of old people. Middle aged people who don't really go out.

Chas: A lot of old people I think.

Steve: People who don't go out socially, drinking and that.

Kev: Retired people I think. Like museums and that are full of oldies. And art galleries and stuff like that, there's all oldies in there.

As a counterpoint to this group, for Colin, the retired civil servant whose austere television tastes we have already noted, it is precisely the association of popular or mainstream cinema with corporeal pleasures that makes it a place to be avoided in favour of watching films at home:

I find the atmosphere of the cinema on the whole somewhat repellent, I do not like popcorn, I do not like the smell of it. And the cinema seems to be a place

for popcorn and the occasional film. I do not like loud noise and the cinema noise is very often deafening.

But it is also relevant here that Colin, a frequent art gallery and museum visitor, belongs to precisely the age group that the skilled workers distance themselves from. It is therefore to the articulation of the relations between age and class in the media field that we now turn.

8.3 Television and new practices of distinction

As with class, the relations between age and extent of participation in cinema and television pull in opposite directions. A little over 30 per cent of those aged 18–34 go to the cinema once a month or more compared to 16 per cent of the 35–54-year-olds and 6 per cent of the over 55s, half of whom never go compared to only 7 per cent of the youngest group. Television viewing, by contrast, increases through the age ranks, albeit that the differences are not so marked or so consistent. Age also significantly affects channel choice, although less for ITV, which fluctuates by only 12 per cent through the age ranges, than for the BBC channels, with preferences increasing roughly threefold from the 18–34-year-olds to those over 55, while Channel 4 is most liked by the under-44s.

It is in relation to genre choice, however, that age matters most. The ratio of the preferences of the 18–34-year-olds compared to those aged 55 and over ranges from 8:1 in the case of horror films to 0.5:1 in the case of westerns. Science fiction, alternative/art cinema and comedy are also strongly associated with younger viewers, and musicals, literary adaptations and costume dramas with older ones (see Table 8.3). In television, soap operas, drama, sports and cookery, home improvement and gardening programmes are liked pretty evenly across the age ranges. The genre preferences most strongly marked by age are quizzes and game shows, which are liked by those aged 55 and over relative to 18–34-year-olds at a ratio of 12:1; news and current affairs programmes (3:1); arts programmes, variety television and documentaries (2:1), and police and detective shows (7:5). Younger viewers prefer comedy programmes and reality television at a ratio of roughly 4:1, and films at 7:2, relative to those over 55.

While these comparisons of genre preferences have their value at a broad-brush level, they are also, as we have seen in chapters 5 and 6, quite incapable of tracing some of the more fine-grained distinctions through which social groups define their differences from those groups that are closest to them in social space. More specific criticisms of the value of film and television genres for the analysis of social distinction have pointed to the semantic instability of genre labels, which are often understood and interpreted differently by different respondents (Philips, 2005). Film and television genre categories are also notoriously incapable of catching the fine-grained distinctions that readers, viewers and listeners operate within genres, often attaching different meanings and values to different instances of the same genre and according them different degrees of legitimacy (Glevarec, 2006). It is also clear that analysis couched solely in terms of genres cannot

Table 8.3 Film type liked most, by age (column percentage)

Film type	18–34	35–54	55+	Young/old (%)	n
<i>Youngest high preferences</i>					
Horror	12	2	1.5	800	71
Science fiction	9	7	3	300	101
Alternative/art cinema	3	3	1	300	31
Comedy	24	18	9	266	258
Fantasy	2	2	1	200	25
Film noir	1	0.5	0	200	6
Bollywood	0.9	1	0.6	150	13
Action/adventure/thriller	28	33	20	140	423
Romance	7	9	5	140	110
<i>Oldest high preferences</i>					
Crime	3	5	4	75	58
War	2	2	5	40	48
Documentary	3	5	10	30	101
Cartoon	0.2	1	1	20	11
Musical	2	2	11	18	82
Costume drama/literary adaptations	2	6	16	12.5	130
Westerns	0.5	3	9	5.5	66
None/other					30
n	441	584	539		1564

capture the processes of trans- and inter-generic mixing and matching through which different subcultures invert the values that are established for those genres – horror, for example – within established hierarchies of legitimacy (Penley, 1991; Sconce, 1995; Tulloch and Jenkins, 1995; Jancovich, 2000).

There is plenty of evidence from our own data to support these conclusions. Some of our genre labels gave rise to evident difficulties. *Film noir*, for example, was quite often misinterpreted. We picked this up in our household interviews where both Terry, a warehouse manager, and Sandra, a full-time mother, base their dislike of *film noir* on misunderstandings of the genre: for Terry, *film noir* means foreign films with subtitles whilst, for Sandra, it means ‘modern arty films’. There is, of course, some truth in these perceptions, for *film noir* does operate as an exclusive label, and it is notable that only those of our interviewees who were cultural specialists – cultural intermediaries, in Bourdieu’s terms – are fully at home in their use of this generic label.⁶ The significance of subgeneric distinctions is, however, of greater importance. We encountered this in two ways. First, our household interviews show a wide range of variation in the textual referents and inter-textual frames respondents have in mind when asked about particular genres. Science-fiction films prove particularly liable to a wide range of inter-textual inscriptions of this kind, attesting to the operation of a varied range of reading formations.⁷ Science fiction is thus variously interpreted as space adventure, best exemplified by *Star Trek*, connecting to an exploration of the paranormal by Terry; as an alternative to literary adaptations and costume

dramas by Dougie, a university research scientist, whose preference for the genre, exemplified by *The Matrix*, is based on specifically formal qualities (the quality of their story-lines); as, for Fruit Bat, a 26-year old technician, a complex dystopic form, exemplified by *Bladerunner*, valued as a means of exploring problems of contemporary existence; and, for Jenny, as an experimental genre, exemplified by *The Matrix* and Terry Gilliam's *Twelve Monkeys*, valued as means for exploring the problems of relativism.

The need for care in using genre labels is also clear from our survey data. For our ethnic boost sample, the term 'soap operas' covered significantly different responses to *Coronation Street* – which none of the Indian and Pakistani members of this sample like – and the more cosmopolitan *EastEnders*, which is very popular with all three groups, more so than for members of the main sample.⁸ The category of sports television proves similarly variable when probed more closely. An analysis of responses to our question asking which sports people most like to watch, whether live or on television, produced three distinct clusters:

Cluster 1: Ice hockey, boxing, wrestling, darts, snooker, and speedway and stockcar racing.

Cluster 2: Soccer, rugby league, cricket, basketball, horse racing, swimming, gymnastics, athletics and Formula One racing.

Cluster 3: Rugby union, tennis, golf, skiing.

While, in line with responses to our general question about sports television, there are a few class differences in sports preferences in the second cluster, this is not true of the first and third clusters. Interest in watching rugby union varies from 13 per cent of the professional-executive class to 4 per cent of the working class, and in watching darts from 3 per cent of the working classes to less than 1 per cent of the intermediate classes. These discrepancies are often sharper when variations within these three classes are taken into account. Watching golf, while fairly popular across all three classes at the aggregate level, is far more popular with large employers and higher-level managers at 17 per cent than with either higher or lower professionals at 6 per cent and 3 per cent, respectively. There are similar variances with respect to level of education: those with university degrees are more than twice as likely to watch sports in the third cluster compared to those with no educational qualifications, a ratio that is more than equalled – but in reverse – for the sports in the first cluster.

It was with such considerations in mind that we asked a set of questions to explore preferences for particular television programmes rather than genres. Focusing here on the responses to those programmes falling within the broad category of fiction, four separate groups of programmes emerge from a correlation analysis of first and second choice responses to these questions. *Coronation Street*, *EastEnders*, *Home and Away* and *Big Brother* are closely related as a soaps/reality television cluster, while *Midsomer Murders*, *A Touch of Frost*, *The Bill* and *Bad Girls* comprise

a popular drama grouping. *West Wing*, *Spooks* and *Six Feet Under* are closely related as a 'new drama' cluster of programmes while *Friends*, *Sex and the City*, *South Park* and *Absolutely Fabulous* constitute a 'new comedy' cluster.

The new comedy and new drama groups form part of a wider set of programmes whose properties have been widely invoked in debates about 'quality television' as evidence for new forms of qualitative division within the television text (see Jacobs, 2001; Geraghty, 2003; Bjarkman, 2004; and Smith and Wilson, 2004). In one of the most probing discussions in this literature, Jason Jacobs relates *The West Wing* and *Sex and the City* to a wider set of programmes including, for example, *The Sopranos*, *Twin Peaks* and *The X-Files* as sharing with Romantic aesthetics a predilection for the fragment as both complete in itself and yet also part of a larger whole. The fragmentary organisation of these shows, Jacobs argues, echoing John Caldwell's discussion of the distinguishing properties of contemporary forms of 'televisuality' (Caldwell, 1995), are well suited to the development of a distinctive television aesthetic because they foreground and play with the properties of television. He attributes this to the respects in which the 'boundaries of each episode are clearly marked and yet also blurred by the recognition, internalised by the episode itself, of interruption by the contingencies of the commercial broadcast environment, as well as of the story arcs beyond and behind it' (Jacobs, 2001: 444).

It is therefore useful to compare responses to these two groups of programmes with the popular drama and soaps/reality groups as a way of breaking down the broad genre categories, which, as we saw in Table 8.1, elicited only slight variations in levels of class interest. Drama, for example, is liked by all classes at a similar rate of 8 or 9 per cent. When we look at responses to the popular drama and new drama groups of programmes, however, we see that preferences for new drama are quite sharply divided in class terms compared with the significant levels of shared interest in popular drama (see Table 8.4). The same is true for new comedy. While comedy as a general category is liked by all classes pretty well equally, new comedy shares the tendency of new drama for preferences to increase with ascending class position, albeit not to the same degree. It is also important to note that, within the professional-executive class, both new comedy and new drama receive their highest levels of support from the professional classes rather than from large employers and higher-level managers. Preferences for these two groups of programmes also correlate strongly with rising levels of education, differing in this respect from both soap operas and popular drama. The differences in relation to age are equally marked for popular drama, with level of interest more or less tripling from the youngest to the oldest age group, and for new comedy where interest decreases sharply with age. Age also differentiates significantly within the professional-executive class, where liking new drama programmes declines from 21 per cent of the 24–35-year-olds through every age group, except for the 55–64-year-olds, to none for those aged 75 and over.

This corroborates the link between new drama and age-based practices of distinction related to younger managers and professionals who mark out their

Table 8.4 Preferences for television programmes, by class, education and age (percentages by row)

<i>Class/education/age</i>	<i>Soaps/reality</i>	<i>Popular drama</i>	<i>New drama</i>	<i>New comedy</i>	<i>n*</i>
Professional-executive class	16	27	11	17	256
Intermediate class	20	32	7	15	335
Working class	28	34	3	12	543
No qualifications	26	43	3	5	326
GCSE/O-level	28	31	4	13	287
Further	22	32	5	12	158
A-level/higher	22	25	7	21	122
University	16	21	11	21	252
18–24	21	16	5	31	105
25–34	27	18	7	25	229
35–44	24	29	8	14	237
45–54	24	33	6	12	200
55–64	25	41	4	8	187
65–74	16	50	5	2	123
75+	18	42	0	1	80

* Numbers do not correspond to sample totals as responses are only to a selection of the range of programmes included in this question.

distinctive place in the social space of television *within* its distinctively televisual forms, rather than opting for its ‘windows on to worlds’ potential. The strong presence of American imports in these two programme clusters also lends support to the view that the cutting-edge of American media culture has displaced the role of traditional European forms of cultural capital in the social trajectories of younger management and professional elites in both Britain (Savage *et al.*, 2005a) and France (Glevarec, 2007). Our household interviews tend in the same direction: only one of 96 references to named films is to a European film, Ingmar Bergman’s *Fanny and Alexander*. It is also worth noting that American new comedy programmes are very popular with the younger members of our ethnic boost sample, while the strong ‘middle England’ association of the popular drama programmes meant that these, like the signature genres of quality British cinema (costume drama and literary adaptations), recruit hardly any interest from the members of this sample. These issues are taken up in more detail in Chapter 13.

Thus, notwithstanding its general role in flattening social distinctions, television now plays a significant role in how the younger and rising sections of the professional-executive class and intermediate classes position themselves within the cultural field. The fact that, within these two classes, men’s and women’s preferences for new drama are more or less evenly drawn, whereas, in the case of new comedy, women are more likely to be devotees than men, indicates that there are complex relations between class and gender to be investigated too.

8.4 Film and the differential value of 'aesthetics' and 'the real'

In both film and television, genre preferences are extremely polarised in relation to gender. In the case of film, women's first preferences, expressed as a ratio of men's, range from 31:1 for romance films to 1:10 in the case of war movies, with costume dramas, literary adaptations and Bollywood also being strongly liked by women, while science fiction, westerns, documentaries and *film noir* are more likely to be liked by men (see Table 8.5). Television genre choices are also divided very sharply in relation to gender. Sports and soap operas are the polar extremes here, with women liking the latter at a ratio of 13:1 to men and the former reversing this pretty well exactly. Other genres liked more by women than by men are cookery, domestic improvement and gardening shows at a ratio of about 3:1, and arts programmes and police shows at a ratio of 2:1. Men and women like watching films on television and reality television pretty much equally. After sport, men's preferences are for documentary programmes at a ratio of 2:1, news and current affairs at 3:2, and comedy programmes, although the differences here are less pronounced.

Once again, however, it is the differences within these broad-band genre preferences that are most revealing in terms of more localised dynamics of distinction. Science fiction, literary adaptations and costume dramas are the

Table 8.5 Film preferences and gender (column per cent)

Film genres	Men	Women	Women/men ratio	n
<i>Mainly women</i>				
Romance	0.4	12.5	31:1	110
Costume drama/literary adaptation	2.7	13.1	5:1	130
Musicals	2.5	7.5	3:1	82
Bollywood	0.4	1.2	3:1	13
Crime	2.3	4.9	2:1	58
Comedy	12.3	20	1.6:1	258
Cartoons	0.6	0.7	1.2:1	11
<i>Men/women ratio</i>				
<i>Mainly men</i>				
Horror	4.6	4.5	1.2:1	71
Fantasy	1.8	1.4	1.3:1	25
Action/thriller	34.8	20.7	1.7:1	423
Alternative/art cinema	3	1.2	2.5:1	31
Science fiction	10.1	3.4	3:1	101
Westerns	7.5	1.5	5:1	66
Documentary	8.5	1.4	6:1	101
Film noir	0.7	0.1	7:1	6
War	6.1	0.6	10:1	48
None/other				30
n	713	851		1564

genres that are most strongly associated with the two highest class positions relative to all other classes: science fiction recruits support from the professional-executive class at a rate of 5:2 relative to the main sample means, and costume dramas and literary adaptations do so at a rate of 7:4. However, the ratios within these two classes exhibit large variations in the preferences of men and women. Women within these classes like costume dramas and literary adaptations at a rate of roughly 5:1 relative to men, whereas male employers, senior managers and professionals like science fiction at a ratio of 7:1 relative to their female counterparts. The significance of these differences becomes clearer when considered in relation to the gendered pattern of trainings among the university-educated members of these classes. Thirty-five per cent of those who studied science, maths or engineering at university – and 77 per cent of these are men – belong to these classes compared to 22 per cent of those who studied social science or humanities subjects, a little short of two-thirds of whom are women. Only 1 per cent of those studying the science set of subjects have a strong liking for costume dramas and literary adaptations compared to 13 per cent of those with social science or humanities degrees, while these patterns are reversed – although less extremely – in the case of science fiction. Clearly, then, film tastes are connected to quite sharp differences in the acquisition of gendered forms of cultural capital and their relations to different processes of class recruitment.

Although a little harder to probe, references to the value of realism in both film and television play a similar role in orchestrating gendered distinctions within the working class. In the case of television, and particularly for older viewers, a certain prestige attaches to news, current affairs and documentary forms as embodying a ‘windows on to worlds’ orientation rather than an ensnarement in the ‘made-up’ world of such specifically televisual genres as reality television and soaps. However, this prestige does not translate over into film and cinema, where it is the aesthetic genres like art and alternative cinema, costume dramas, literary adaptations and *film noir* whose relative association with the professional and executive class is strongest. It is amongst the working classes that documentary, as a film rather than a television genre, recruits its greatest support (see Table 8.2) just as it is far more popular with men than with women (see Table 8.5).

Our household interviews give us some clues as to how we might best make sense of these figures. Preferences for documentary or realist forms are frequently couched in terms similar to those used to express an aversion to fantasy films and, as the most strongly disliked film genre, horror movies.⁹ Yet there are differences in the ways in which this antipathy to horror films is expressed by men and by women. For women, it is the scariness of horror films – their blood and gore – that is most often invoked. For Terri, it is her squeamishness, her dislike of ‘anything involving blood or stress’ that comes to mind when she is asked why she dislikes horror films so much. Janet too finds it impossible to see how people could derive any pleasure from ‘blood, guts and gore’. Women’s dislike of war movies is often expressed in similar terms: by Maria, for example, who dislikes both their violence and, as she sees it, their bogus claims to factual accuracy. For many men,

however, dislike of horror, fondness for the documentary form, and a fondness for war movies, expressed in terms of an interest in history, all go together. Robert thus connects his liking for television documentaries to his interest in war films as both being factually based – both ways of ‘getting the truth’ – and contrasts them to soap operas as pure make-believe and to horror films as unreal.

These contrasting sets of evaluations are nicely played out in the different responses of the working-class couple, Joe and Edie. Edie’s preferences are for romance films, defined in opposition to horror films: ‘I don’t like blood, gore and something that’s gonna give you a nasty dream at night’. For Joe, however, the value of ‘the real’ connects his liking for documentaries and war films, and his dislike of horror films, into a unified set.

Joe: I like to watch war history, the History Channel, I quite like to watch about the wars, World War I and World War II, I’m quite interested in them. And any sort of past things in history that have happened...

Interviewer: You said the type of film you liked least was horror.

Joe: Yeah, it just doesn’t interest me at all.

Interviewer: Have you never liked horror films?

Joe: No, never, I don’t think I’ve ever really sat down and watched a horror film because you know it’s just make-believe and its just rubbish in my opinion.

Interviewer: You don’t like it because it’s make-believe?

Joe: Yeah, I think probably yeah, it’s make-believe, it’s not really true, it’s just a load of nonsense. No, if I had a choice between horror film and anything else, I’d probably watch the anything else ...

Joe: A favourite film? Probably say *Saving Private Ryan*, that’s a good film, probably that would be in the top three.

Interviewer: Who’s in that?

Joe: Tom Hanks, again I suppose it’s the war thing again, true to life sort of thing, it did happen, it’s an event and I did enjoy it.

8.5 Conclusion

Let us return to our opening discussion of Bourdieu’s relationship to television. If his survey was conducted just as broadcast television was becoming a mass cultural phenomenon in France, our fieldwork was conducted at a time of equally significant change in the British media landscape. Satellite and cable television, and the phased-in introduction of digital television have already significantly weakened the position of broadcast television and are likely to undermine it, and public service broadcasting in particular, still further. Increasing use of the PC for home entertainment, computer gaming and Internet access also mean that both television and cinema have now to find their place in a much broader screen culture. Because our study thus occurred at a watershed between two media ages, we, like Bourdieu, also somewhat hesitantly asked two questions focused on these developing aspects of contemporary media culture: one concerned with cable

and satellite access and channel preferences, and the second with access to the Internet and its uses. The most significant finding – now already superseded by the subsequent growth of both satellite and Internet access since 2003/4 – is that roughly only half the main sample subscribes to cable or satellite channels or has access to the Internet.

There is little to add to our findings concerning the influence of class and gender on cable and satellite channel choice; these reflect the same logics that we have seen operating in broadcast television. However, all groups in the ethnic boost sample are more likely to have cable or satellite television: 72 per cent of both the Indian and Pakistani groups and 61 per cent of Afro-Caribbeans compared to 55 per cent of the main sample. They are also, unsurprisingly, far more likely to be heavy users of ethnic or overseas channels like Asian Network, ZEE TV and B4U. The same is true, although less markedly, of their relation to film and music channels. Internet access, by contrast, is lower among all three minority ethnic groups, but distinctive in its use: the Indian and Pakistani groups are nearly three times as likely to use the Internet to watch film clips as members of the main sample, and Afro-Caribbeans about twice as likely. This is also a favoured use of the Internet on the part of the younger members of the main sample.

How far these developments will affect the place of screen culture in the processes and dynamics of distinction remains to be seen. Two general conclusions concerning the roles that film and television currently play in these processes, however, can be drawn. The first concerns the role that television plays in marking out niche distinctions within the space of lifestyles, although, as we have seen, this is much clearer at the level of programmes than it is of genres. Second, where both film and television divide most significantly in class terms is in relation to participation: positively in relation to cinema attendance, where going to the cinema frequently and particularly to art-house venues, has strong connections with the professional-executive class, and negatively in relation to television, because watching television does not count as an asset.

Indeed, television occupies the position of a negative asset in the processes of cultural capital formation. Not watching television at all or too much; watching it in the right channel environment; watching it in the right way, with a serious pedagogic purpose rather than for its own sake: only these modes of appropriation turn television into an asset by creating a distance from the negative associations that condense around the image of the couch potato. These, as Mike Michael summarises them, include the image of: (a) *the unhealthy body*, and, as such, a drain on national health resources; (b) *the unproductive body*, mesmerised in front of the telly rather than getting out to work; (c) *the uncultured body*, inertly and inattentively absorbing whatever comes out of the box rather developing an active intellectual relationship to the medium; and (d) *the uncivic body*, indulging in solitary or merely familial entertainment in the home at the expense of an active involvement in the public sphere (Michael, 2000: 106). This is how the post-Kantian legacy manifests itself, juxtaposing an attentiveness that is brought under the proper control of the will to the flabby indulgence of wallowing in the sensate.

This also explains the marked animosity toward reality television evident among the professional-executive class and our elite sample, for it transgresses two aspects of the pedagogic relationship to television that predominates among these groups. The first, as Helen Wood and Bev Skeggs note, concerns the degree to which it confounds the distinction between televisual genres – that is, those genres that produce made-up worlds – and the ‘windows on to worlds’ orientation that governs this pedagogic orientation. Reality television is both a world that is entirely made-up within television – a manifestly fabricated set of situations and relationships – but also one which purports to illuminate the world outside of television, to be in some way real. As such, it renders unstable the position from which the pedagogic relationship to television is organised via a “‘staging of the real” in which “the real” is constituted through a contrived set of scenarios produced for entertainment, rather than any socially realist argumentation of benefit to public culture’ (Wood and Skeggs, 2008: 181). Second, and perhaps more importantly, Wood and Skeggs argue that many reality-television formats work to dramatise class by fabricating situations in which the participants either succeed or fail ‘through access to or lack of cultural and emotional resources required to move easily around the social spaces of unfamiliarity’ (Wood and Skeggs, 2008: 186). While this often means the pathologisation of the working classes for their failure to exhibit the forms of middle-class self-command and self-reflexiveness, which Skeggs (2004) argues are now crucial to the conceptual and cultural organisation of class boundaries, it also places those forms of selfhood on trial in ways that many members of the professional-executive classes clearly find unpalatable.

In comparison with the field of visual art, electronic media consumption, and especially television, contributes less to the accumulation of cultural capital. One reason is the absence of exclusivity – almost everyone participates and access is possible from within the confines of the home and without the need to attend events that may be expensive or socially uncomfortable. The institutional guardianship that governs the core of activities in the art field, the museum and the gallery, is simply absent with television. Television is not a field where institutional cultural capital (yet) operates. But it is probably also important that the field of television has been changing at a very rapid rate. New technologies, new platforms for delivery, rapid multiplication of channels, etc., do not easily allow the establishment of an agreed value for particular items or modes of appropriation, which might amplify a store of cultural capital that can subsequently be exchanged. Rather, as we have remarked, the media present a much more even field than others; it is not a source of great rifts or disputes, and its divisions do not occur mainly along class lines. The media could, in principle, and probably does to some degree, serve as a source for acquiring technical, emotional and subcultural capital, and it plays a role in the definition of national capital, but without being a great force for the formation of a cultural hierarchy.

9 Cultural capital and the body

9.1 Introduction

All bodies carry marks of their experience. To the extent that a society systematically awards different roles and unequal esteem to men and women, young and old, black and white, bodily appearance offers an initial orientation in many encounters. Bodily properties hence supply the most ubiquitous ways of classifying people – by gender, race, age and class. For example, in the past, one of the main ways in which it was possible to identify the social class to which a person belonged was by reference to their physical attributes. In a world of manual labour, often outdoors, the colour and texture of the skin and the tone of muscles were indications of class. Simple observable physical indicators of difference are perhaps in decline, though the prognosis of the emergent ‘crisis of obesity’ seems to bear with it a revitalised, moralising, class-based discourse of shame and blame about body shape. At the same time, differential health status is probably the most enduring and incontrovertible indication of class. In even the most egalitarian of countries there is a monotonic relationship between class position and measures of morbidity and mortality (Wilkinson, 1996). This is reflected in answers to our question about self-rated health; 81 per cent of professionals replied affirmatively to the question ‘For your age, do you consider you are in good health?’, compared to 67 per cent of the working class.

Classification by physique is compounded, at least in stereotype, by clothing; the use of blue-collar and white-collar to categorise occupations is just one indication. Class uniforms have gone and, especially among younger people, jeans and a T-shirt have become universal attire transcending boundaries of class, gender and ethnicity. Nevertheless, what one wears continues to mark position; green Wellingtons, gold chains, headscarves, branded training shoes and hooded jerkins convey meaning. Sociologically such issues can be addressed in numerous ways but we start from Bourdieu’s insight that embodied attributes constitute cultural capital, with some features carrying more value than others. In the management of the body – through eating, clothing, exercise and medication – individuals and social groups exhibit difference. Mostly, difference is manifested in the same way as in other fields, as for instance where exercise regimes or preferences for different types of restaurant reflect social hierarchies. However, in addition,

as generations of comedy attest, dialect, accent, inflection of the voice, vulgarity of expression, facial expressions of contempt, body posture and movement, are indications of 'attitude' linked to social position. These features were hard to capture in our survey and required a focus less on a single field, and more on how bodily practices reflect the unequal distribution of cultural (and other types of) capital.

In recent decades, body management techniques have become a very conspicuous aspect of self-presentation and have been served by the expansion of commercial services to deal with diet and health, physical training and cosmetic improvement to appearances. This may be related to the phenomenon which Bourdieu called 'californianisation', a new culture of the body that proved particularly attractive to sections of the middle class deficient in legitimate cultural capital. We therefore asked about participation in a few body-maintenance activities, inquiring about sporting activity and preferences, about how often respondents went to a gym or did exercises, yoga or keep-fit routines, about piercing and tattooing, and about use of alternative health therapies, conjecturing that these too would be unequally distributed across the population. This combination of recreational activities, forms of popular culture and markers of 'lifestyle' plays an important part in the contemporary cultural mosaic.

After having clarified the concept of embodied cultural capital in Section 9.2, we examine three sets of practices of body management. Section 9.3 explores the distribution of involvement in sport and physical exercise, considering which sports respondents prefer, looking for signs of distinction by inference from patterns of participation. We supplement this by asking why people are involved. Section 9.4 considers engagement in practices of body management and modification, and preferences in styles of clothing. Section 9.5 investigates aspects of food consumption, especially eating out. The material in this chapter is thus variegated, not restricted to a single field as in other chapters in Part III. It deals with activities and tastes associated with the body in different ways. Consequently, the lessons to be learned are varied. Some activities, like eating out, act mostly as vehicles for the expression of objective cultural capital. Others, like dress and body modification, are more specifically aspects of embodied cultural capital, directly concerned with physical presentation of self.

9.2 The concept of embodied cultural capital

Bourdieu was prone to expand the number of types of capital and the number of fields as it became expedient or convenient. In one prominent essay (1986) Bourdieu distinguished between institutionalised, objectified and embodied cultural capital. Embodied cultural capital seems to refer sometimes to resources that others call human capital – skills and competences, cognitive and manual, which when deployed may be sold or gifted to others. On other occasions it seems to refer to bodily *hexis*, to accent, posture and demeanour; to the appearance and presentation of the body to others. This latter type is very important, was extensively deployed in *Distinction*, and is the subject of this chapter.

Concerned throughout his career to explain the reproduction of privilege in modern societies, Bourdieu was early to recognise the importance of body-management practices (1978, 1984[1979]). *Distinction* paid considerable attention to mundane activities like eating, sport and clothing, which reflect, in just the same way as would engagement with the arts, holdings of economic and cultural capital, and thus help constitute symbolically distinguished lifestyles. In many domains of the social world, according to Bourdieu, people unconsciously acknowledge and reveal their own social position through a complex process of classifying themselves and others in terms of preferences for activities, possessions and performances. Preferences for sport are part of the dispositions that constitute the *habitus* and thereby become elements of embodied cultural capital.

In *Distinction*, Bourdieu made a series of passing remarks about the importance of what he called bodily *hexis* in the conduct of classifiable activities. Manners and mannerisms, posture and bearing, body shape and presentation, and accent are all deeply embodied, mostly unconsciously reproduced and represented in many situations, and are thoroughly revealing of social origins and position. Such propensities and dispositions are, of course, learned and, indeed, cultivated. Bourdieu put great emphasis on the importance of a class-based *habitus*, which generates dispositions that individuals draw upon in their daily life. Different groups and classes cultivate different types of body. Bodies bear the marks of social class. In *Distinction*, Bourdieu offered a broad-brush characterisation of the embodied characteristics of members of different classes. For example, he said:

Everything seems to indicate that the concern to cultivate the body appears, in its elementary form – that is, as the cult of health – often associated with an ascetic exaltation of sobriety and controlled diet, in the middle classes (junior executives, the medical services and especially school teachers, and particularly among women in these strongly feminised categories). These classes, who are especially anxious about appearance and therefore about their body-for-others, go in very intensively for gymnastics, the ascetic sport par excellence, since it amounts to a sort of training (*askesis*) for training's sake.

(Bourdieu, 1984: 213)

He contrasted this with the bourgeoisie who ensure that their activities remain socially exclusive:

... economic barriers – however great they may be in the case of golf, skiing, sailing or even riding and tennis – are not sufficient to explain the class distribution of these activities. There are more hidden entry requirements, such as family tradition and early training, or the obligatory manner (of dress and behaviour), and socialising techniques, which keep these sports closed to the working class and to upwardly mobile individuals from the middle or upper classes and which maintain them (along with smart parlour games

like chess and especially bridge) among the surest indicators of bourgeois pedigree.

(Bourdieu, 1984: 217)

In *Distinction*, Bourdieu grounded these discriminating features in observations about eating, clothing and sport, three domains where the body is shaped and cultivated. Distinctions among bodies, he maintained, will, by a process of homology, parallel preferences in other domains – of music, cinema and art. A preference for golf or cross country skiing – at least in France in the 1970s – is no less revealing of a privileged social position than would be a taste for Bach or Kandinsky.

It is not, however, easy to *measure* embodied cultural capital. Bourdieu included a variety of measures from official statistics on expenditure on body management, through photography, to instructing his interviewers to take notes on people's dress, haircuts, beards and posture. Since we thought that asking interviewers to make notes on appearances was problematic, both ethically and in terms of the reliability of observations, we have a more limited range of data on which to deal with what is a complicated and multi-faceted topic.

We incorporated into the multiple correspondence analysis (MCA) modalities relating to both sport and eating out. Survey respondents could nominate the sport that they most liked to take part in, and, as we saw in Chapter 8 were asked about their favourite and least favourite sports to watch live or on TV.¹ We also included measures of how frequently people visit a pub and eat away from home, and asked which type of restaurant they most and least like. Both sport and eating out contribute to every axis in some part, though they are the least powerful of discriminatory fields (see Figure 3.1). Taste questions differentiated more than participation ones, especially on the third axis, where gender differences towards televised sport are strongly polarised.

9.3 Sport and physical exercise

Washington and Karen (2001) argue that the full significance of sport is rarely appreciated. It is a domain with enormous ramifications for economy, culture and society: it is a gigantic industry; it is invested in heavily by the state; it is watched by almost everyone, and fills miles of column inches in the press every week; it is something that all children and most adults are encouraged to do, for its physical and social benefits. Yet it is treated often as a rather trivial topic, and thought to be far less important in understanding the relationship between economy and culture than many minority arts and leisure activities.

Sport has had many functions, originally encouraged as a means of training both body and mind, as a source of inculcating social and moral virtues, as a 'healthy' social environment for interaction, as well as a means of maintaining physical well-being. But it is also an issue of status and social classification in its own right. In the past, sports often had strong class connotations. For example, different types of rugby football, and the difference between rugby and soccer were symbolically

significant until recently. Such connotations are neatly analysed by Bourdieu (1978) in his essay on sport and social class. He shows that games underwent transformations that altered their social standing and consequently the kinds of people who would play them. Soccer, while initially popular primarily with the working class, now also attracts a significant middle-class audience following commercialisation strategies and state regulation designed to detach the sport from its working-class fan base.

Considering spectator sports may reveal aspects of the distribution of cultural capital. The social standing of a sport might be reflected in the social composition of its audience – as suggested by Bourdieu; but equally, it might be that spectator sport is a topic of conversation that transcends class boundaries (as suggested by Erickson, 1996) so that knowing about a range of sports enhances ‘bridging’ social capital. In Britain soccer is the most popular of all spectator sports; when choosing among 19 popular sports, 38 per cent of respondents nominate it as their first or second favourite. Tennis is the next most popular, nominated by 18 per cent of people. Fourteen per cent opt for snooker and for rugby union, and 13 per cent choose Formula One motor racing. There are gender differences, predictably: only 24 per cent of women choose soccer, whereas 54 per cent of men do. Rugby union and motor racing are also disproportionately preferred by men and tennis by women. There is a significant class effect for rugby union, too, with the professional class liking to watch and the working class preferring not to.

Our cultural map offers further hints about sport and distinction in Britain (see Figures 3.1–3.4). Not participating at all in sport is located in the left-hand of the first axis. On the third axis, ‘indoor’ sports, like gymnastics and keep fit, sit at the top of the graph, while playing football or golf is at the bottom. The implied class and gender differences are confirmed below.

Tastes register rather more often than participation on the cultural map. Axis 1 indicates that the working class likes watching ‘social’ sports (including snooker, darts, boxing). Axis 2 shows that younger people like watching sport, especially football, while disliking watching ‘club’ sports, such as golf. Axis 3 suggests that women dislike watching sport in general, and especially club sports, but do like watching outdoor (athletics and skiing, for example) and indoor (gymnastics, swimming, aerobics) sports. Men, by contrast, like watching sport, especially football, and dislike watching indoor sports. Axis 4 registered only that the less voracious respondents like watching sport.

According to time-use surveys in Britain, the mean amount of time spent in active participation in sport increased from 4 to 11 minutes per day between 1975 and 2000 (see MTUS).² This is perhaps some measure of increased concern with health, fitness and the management of the body. In that context perhaps the most striking finding of our survey is that 44 per cent of respondents report having no involvement in sport.³ Participation in physical exercise varies considerably in accordance with gender, age, education and occupational class. Women are less likely to nominate a sport: 47 per cent never do sport, compared with 40 per cent of men. Sporting activity declines monotonically with age, though this might be expected in part in the context of reduced physical capacity.

Educational experience is much more significant: 73 per cent of those with a degree do some form of sport, compared to 66 per cent of those with A-level, 62 per cent of those with HND or equivalent, 59 per cent of those with GCSE, and 32 per cent of those with no qualifications. There is a monotonic relationship between class and participation in sport; the higher the class, the greater the participation.⁴ Only 25 per cent of higher professionals never do sport, compared with 59 per cent of routine manual workers. While partly a function of available material resources, this is more likely to be a function of differential concern about body maintenance.

Those who report doing sport engage in a very wide variety of games and exercise regimes. Activities reported included snowboarding, carriage driving, abseiling, coarse fishing, paint-balling and deer-stalking. The most popular, those nominated as their favourite by at least 2 per cent of our respondents, are listed, in order of popularity, in the first column of Table 9.1.

The word 'sport' has particular connotations and the distinction between it and more routine physical exercise is hard to draw. Sport, while a form and source of exercise, typically has some additional attributes, including formalised rules of the game and usually some potential element of competition. As well as asking generally about participation in sport, we asked some more specific questions, including the frequency of participation in 'going to a gym or doing exercises'. A total of 49 per cent of respondents claim to go to the gym or do exercises sometimes; 17 per cent say they do so every day or almost every day; with a further 23 per cent doing something at least once a week. Eighteen per cent of those who do so claim not to play a sport. Thus there is much overlap, but not perfect

Table 9.1 Favourite sport to participate in, by gender

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Men</i>		<i>Women</i>	
	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>% of total sample</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>% of total sample</i>
None	285	40.1	397	46.7
Walking (including dogs)	53	7.5	94	11.0
Keep fit/gym/aerobics	30	4.2	98	11.5
Swimming	18	2.5	79	9.3
Soccer/five-a-side	79	11.1	7	0.8
Golf	63	8.9	7	0.8
Cycling	30	4.2	21	2.5
Jogging/running	18	2.5	16	1.9
Dancing	6	0.8	29	3.4
Tennis	8	1.1	16	1.9
Bowls	13	1.8	7	0.8
Yoga	1	0.1	17	2.0
Badminton	8	1.1	7	0.8
Other	98	13.8	56	6.6
Total	710	99.7	851	100.0

coincidence, between claiming to do sport and taking exercise. Nevertheless, it is more or less the same *categories* of people who claim to participate in a sport who also report regular exercise. Asked, 'How often do you go to the gym or do exercises?', 36 per cent of the professional-executive class say never, compared to 68 per cent of routine workers.⁵

Frequency of participation in exercise indicates that many people now consider exercise a sufficiently important aspect of their lives to devote attention to regular activity for the purpose of fitness and body discipline. Bourdieu referred to this as exercise for its own sake, and suggested that it had an affinity with a particular fraction of the population. Going to the gym and exercising regularly are practices embraced by those with greater education and higher social status. Our evidence shows a class gradient to engagement in these ascetic routines of training for training's sake.

Some of the attractions of exercise culture to the educated middle class can be gleaned from interviews with them. Analysis of discussions about sport and the body with the 16 adults living in the 11 high cultural capital households where the survey respondent held a degree indicates some of the reasons why people exercise. Almost all of our interviewees with degrees believe that exercise contributes to general well-being. There is general consensus, not restricted to the middle class, on the value of exercise, but it is most seriously entertained by the most highly educated. Some resistance to sport exists among those with high cultural capital – with two male interviewees vehemently protesting their lack of interest in sport – and there is some expressed aversion to exercise. As Fruit Bat says, 'Physical exercise? – no I don't do exercise for exercise's sake'. But mostly there is a strong sense of prudence. To exercise is prudent, if not quite an obligation or duty, and is something that should be done if it can be fitted in. Fitness and health, rarely distinguished in everyday conversation, are the principal considerations; but relaxation from stress is also mentioned a lot. Regulating the body is an important concern for the educated middle class.

Bourdieu discussed at some length whether, when people with different *habitus* participate in a sport, they are necessarily engaged in the same practice. How one approaches a sport is itself a differentiating factor. He detected class styles for playing the same game, marked by club memberships, attire, manners and orientation.

It can easily be shown that the different classes do not agree on the profits expected from sport, be they specific physical profits, such as effects on the external body, like slimness, elegance or visible muscles and on the internal body, like health or relaxation; or extrinsic profits, such as the social relationships a sport may facilitate, or possible economic and social advantages.

(Bourdieu, 1984: 211)

To explore these issues, we asked respondents what was the main reason for liking their favourite form of exercise. Of those who recorded playing a sport,

fitness is considered the most important benefit by 30 per cent of respondents, relaxation by 21 per cent, sociability by 12 per cent, and escape from work and obligations by 9 per cent. Eight per cent opt for competition and for 'the buzz'. Clearly, then, sporting activities are entered into for a mix of motives, though the primacy of fitness is probably noteworthy given contemporary concern with body maintenance. Fitness is chosen more or less equally by men and women, but men are more likely to say competition, team spirit or sociability, while women are likely to identify relaxation and escape from work and obligations. Also, the professional, managerial and intermediate occupations opt disproportionately for fitness, sociability and escape from work. Small employers and self-employed are the most likely to seek competition through their sporting practice. Those holding degrees are particularly likely to opt for fitness. Those women whose preferred sport is 'keep fit, aerobics or gym' or 'swimming' are particularly likely to identify fitness as the most valued aspect of their engagement.

The household interviews reveal varied meanings associated with how sport and exercise are integrated into daily life. A good many interviewees report, rather ruefully, that they now exercise less than previously. Susan Mirza Foot 'used to walk'. Her husband, James 'used to go [swimming] quite a lot' before having kids and had played squash and badminton – 'not that I've played those for years'. Euan Thomas had gone to the gym twice a week for four years until recently and he 'used to run most evenings' when, he says, 'I did feel a lot healthier'. And Seren Star ends her discussion with a repeated refrain, 'used to, used to ...'. Decline in activity is often explained in terms of emergent family commitments and is also associated with work commitments. Pressure of work is a common excuse among those with high cultural capital (cf. Gershuny, 2005). Most interviewees exercise alone; participation in team sports is part of their past, of what they used to do. Few, men or women, engage regularly in competitive sport. Some, however, appear very assiduous about fitting in regular exercise and routine is considered very important. A fair amount of activity is organised in accordance with a daily rhythm (walking the dog, swimming or yoga) or a weekly rhythm, perhaps through attending some sort of class. But all narratives refer to routines to account for participation. Exercise is, or has had to be, planned.

Some gender differences are also apparent. Women seem most instrumental and matter-of-fact about exercise. They perceive it as a general good, which ideally they want to do. Exercise rather than sport is emphasised – they are not looking for competitive activity, rather exercise that is reasonably pleasant. Interestingly, there is little explicit reference to dieting or to bodily appearance. Concern about weight is not much cited. A gay man, a young mother and another woman concerned that she was putting on weight as she entered middle age, are the only ones to make an explicit connection between exercise and bodily appearance. One suspects that our group of high cultural capital interviewees are concerned about both fitness and appearance, but feel constrained to emphasise the former rather than the latter when being interviewed. For example, it was from

being exposed by her pre-school aged daughter, who was present in the interview and who said that mummy kept promising to do more exercise, which led the young mother, Susan, to introduce her concern about not paying enough attention to body matters. Functional considerations about body maintenance tended to dominate discussion, without a great deal of reference to exercise being fun or giving pleasure. Women mostly exercise alone, sometimes with other women, shared activity with partners being more likely if children are also involved.

Differences between social groups in participation in particular sports are not great (Warde, 2006). Class patterns are not strongly marked, though cycling, squash and golf are marked as middle class, golf being especially preferred by executives and higher professionals (though small owners and supervisory workers are also disproportionately involved). Education makes very little difference to choice among sports; the effect of education is to determine whether people do sport, without prejudice to which type. There is some variation between ethnic groups, but the greatest differences are by gender (see Table 9.1). Men and women prefer different activities. Of the more popular activities women are over-represented in swimming, keep fit and walking (by four times, three times and half as much again, respectively); and among minority sports they prefer yoga and dancing. Among the activities listed, no women at all register cricket, rugby, fishing, basketball, table tennis, skiing or water polo as their favourite sport. There are fewer activities where no men are recorded – horse riding, gymnastics and basketball. The principal masculine sports are football and golf, where men are over-represented by a factor of rather more than ten. Men also report a wider range of activities, almost twice as many mentioning another, less popular sport as their personal favourite.

Interestingly, there is a significant interaction effect between gender and class; one that is apparent both for participation in a sport, and even more apparent for routine exercise. Women who are in paid employment are more likely to do exercise. Those in white-collar occupations go to the gym or do daily exercises more often than working-class women; and this is accentuated among women in higher-professional occupations. Only 26 per cent of women in the lower-professional and managerial occupations never do exercises, compared with 69 per cent of women in routine occupations. Attending the gym is also more influenced by being younger and better educated than is doing a sport. Younger, middle-class women, then, are particularly prone to do routine, ‘ascetic’ forms of exercise.

9.4 Bodily adornment and care

For most bodily practices, it is difficult to know whether people are driven by a concern with body maintenance, *strictu sensu*, or bodily appearance. We asked questions about body modification, clothing and complementary medicine, practices which bear variously on health and presentation of self.

People were asked about various activities intended to alter, and thereby to improve, the appearance of, or impression communicated by, their bodies.

Table 9.2 Selected body modification activities, by gender

<i>Body modification</i>	<i>Women</i>		<i>Men</i>	
	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
Ears pierced	712	84	139	16
Followed a weight loss diet	375	44	114	16
Tanned on sunbed	260	31	88	12
Permanently tattooed	104	12	110	15
Dentistry to improve look of teeth	127	15	63	9
Done body-building	20	2	129	18
Another body part pierced	110	13	30	4
Taken elocution lessons	41	5	17	2
Plastic surgery to improve looks	8	1	2	—
None of these	92	11	338	47
<i>n</i> = 1564				

Nine activities were listed, and 72 per cent of our respondents had undertaken at least one. The percentages for men and women are presented in Table 9.2.

Further investigation using regression analysis (not reported here) gave some additional insight. It is the young as well as women, who are most likely to have piercings. The same is true of tanning on sunbeds, though this is most common among the lower-managerial, intermediate and supervisory workers. Tattoos appeal to younger men and to routine manual workers, while those with university degrees and from minority ethnic groups avoid them. Body-building is also for the young and for those in managerial occupational classes. Weight loss diets are more common among women, and there is a statistically significant difference between those without qualifications, who do not report dieting, and the rest. Taking these activities together as a group, they are done more by women, the young, the less educated, and those in the working class.

As Table 9.2 shows there are significant gender differences in most of the activities we asked about. That women's practical approach to sport and exercise might be part of a broader concern about appearance is suggested by their greater involvement with piercing, tanning and cosmetic surgery. However, men are now not immune to such considerations, as indicated by their engagement with many of these activities, though only body-building involves more men than women, presumably a testament to a masculine muscular aesthetic. Nevertheless, almost half of the men in the sample had done none of the nine activities, perhaps the strongest evidence that it remains possible for men to take little care in bodily presentation. Admittedly the most frequent act, having ears pierced, is not a major piece of body modification, but insofar as most of these activities are ones that are explicitly aimed at enhancing or elaborating on the appearance of the body, the extent of participation attests to the importance of bodily appearance.

Table 9.3 Preferred styles of dress, by gender

Style	Men		Women		All (%)
	No.	%	No.	%	
Comfortable	397	56	552	65	61
Casual	466	65	459	54	59
Smart	225	32	273	32	32
Fashionable	104	15	223	26	21
Inexpensive	99	14	163	19	17
Easy to maintain	99	14	162	19	17
Traditional	89	13	77	9	11
Convenient	78	11	87	10	11
Designer	63	9	56	7	8
Other	2	0	9	1	0
<i>n</i> = 1564					

Note: Respondents could offer as many answers as they considered fit, hence columns do not sum to 100%.

The question we asked was: 'Using this card, how would you describe your personal style of dress?' Probe: 'Which others?'

Clothing, that universal practice of bodily adornment, gives further clues. We used a survey question similar to one in *Distinction* to inquire about preferred style of dress. Table 9.3 indicates people's preference for clothing style. Britons apparently value most highly casual styles and comfort. The proportions placing value on designer wear are small, although approaching a third of the population like to wear smart clothes.⁶

It appeared from household interviews that respondents had understood the question to be one about preferred styles of dress and that this was something on which everyone could be expected to have a view. Clothing is classified by everyone into at least three categories – work clothes, clothes to live in, and clothes for special or formal occasions. Most think they have limited control over the first and the last, but that clothes to live in are ones which permit some discretion and it is there that any self-attribution of style is manifest. The distinguishing feature of those with more cultural capital is that they make further differentiations within those three categories. Almost all women dress up to go out to public places in the evening, as do a substantial proportion of the men. Different clothes, and to some extent styles of clothes, are required for such occasions. People talk of making an effort, seeking to look good. That effort is for some to be clean, tidy and acceptable, and for others to be smart and well turned out. By contrast, a few men's routine attire is, apparently, only ever disrupted by attendance at a funeral or wedding. Overall, the interviews suggest that the predominant orientation towards clothing is that it should be ordinary and functional, few feeling that they want to make a social statement through their dress. This is accompanied, however, by a slight

anxiety that they ought to be more concerned and take more care. Jenny expresses a common view:

I'm not really very interested in fashion. So therefore, if I'm in jeans and a jumper, that's me. I'm happy with that. Obviously it's nice to dress up sometime, but I don't really bother that much.

In discussion of the meaning of the terms 'casual' and 'comfortable', it transpired that they cover a range of items, though both are contrasted with work clothes. A casual look, an aspiration of most men, could entail anything from tracksuit bottoms and a polo shirt, to pressed trousers and a tailored shirt. Comfortable has something to do with the texture and cut-of garments, but also has an intimation of feeling that the clothes somehow suit the character of the interviewee. Nonetheless, tastes for the comfortable and the casual are recognisably distinct from those for the fashionable or designer-wear. A few interviewees, men and women, say that they try to be fashionable, others want to be smart on all occasions. Only a few, and all with high cultural capital, suggest that they seek to make a distinctive impression through their clothing, to stand out from the crowd. So Euan explains how he dressed in a meeting 'because I didn't want to look like everybody else'. Much more common is the wish not to stand out. Frank wants to wear 'Nothing too loud, nothing that would stand out'. Another man, particularly inarticulate on the topic, assented to the slightly exasperated interviewer's suggestion that he seemed to prefer clothes which would make him invisible.

That clothing is generally not a big deal for most is highlighted by the exceptional account of an older Indian woman who makes a strong connection between mode of dress and family honour. Surbhitra had recorded that she prefers traditional dress. She observes that 'we Hindus, we Indians, we were very, our upbringing was really cultural. If you go out of line it was the talk of the town'. And with reference to her 30-year old daughter she said:

I still say that OK, when you go to your in-laws make sure that you are traditionally dressed ... If you are married, traditionally you just have to have your limits.

By such standards, sartorial rules of appearance are of less symbolic moment among the mass of Britons.

Differential concern for health, rather than appearance, is revealed by the take up of complementary medicine. A range of increasingly commercialised activities concerned with routine maintenance and repair of the body (and the mind) are now widely available. We asked about engagement in alternative therapies, and found that almost half of the population (48 per cent) had used at least one. After consultations for sports injuries, the most commonly used are counselling, chiropractic and acupuncture, each of which has been used by more than 10 per cent (see Table 9.4). Members of the working class are significantly less likely to

Table 9.4 Alternative and complementary medical treatments, by class (column percentages)

<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Professional executive</i>	<i>Intermediate class</i>	<i>Working class</i>	<i>All</i>
Sports injury	21	24	14	18
Counselling	15	12	12	13
Psychotherapy	4	4	5	4
Shiatsu massage	4	4	2	3
Homeopathy	6	6	3	5
Chiropractic	16	13	8	11
Acupuncture	11	13	8	10
Other alternative health	19	16	8	13
None of these	45	42	60	52
<i>n</i> = 1564				

Source: The question we asked was: 'Which, if any, of the things on this card have you ever had?'
 Probe: 'Which others?'

be among the sizeable minorities taking such treatments. In addition, alternative treatments are taken more by women than by men, by older people, and by those with college or university qualifications.

9.5 Eating and cuisine

We were surprised that so few people say that they had followed weight-loss diets. Perhaps the question was interpreted as paying for special courses of treatment, or embarking on a proprietary diet, since most people at some time seem to be watching what they eat in order to control their weight and their girth. Seeking to capture some other aspects of participation and taste in relation to food, we asked how often people ate out and what were their most and least favourite types of restaurants. The topic of eating out was also addressed in a number of focus groups. Meals eaten at home were discussed in almost every household interview.

Eating out is one of the most popular of contemporary leisure activities, the current period being distinctive because paying to dine out for pleasure is no longer the preserve of a small rich minority, but is increasingly common to all strata of the population. Sixty-two per cent of the sample eat a main meal out for pleasure at least once a month and only 4 per cent never eat out. There are very many commercial outlets, selling various types of meal, with attributions to cuisines from almost everywhere across the globe.

Axis 1 of our cultural map partitions people who eat out very rarely (on the left) from those who do so very often (to the right), implying an anticipated class dimension to the activity. Tastes in restaurants are also discriminating. Having tastes for, or against, fish-and-chip restaurants and French restaurants proved most divisive. Fish and chips are popular with the working class, but disliked by the educated and older professional-executive class. The young and less well educated

are averse to French restaurants, while higher-class and older respondents nominate French as their favourite – a taste which clusters with heavy participation in high culture, a liking for Impressionism and for classical music. No differences are apparent on axis 3, suggesting that gender is not a very important determinant in choice of restaurant, and on axis 4 only the nomination of pub restaurants as favourite registers, typifying the less voracious.

Variations in both eating out and ways of talking about it are very apparent in the focus groups. The members of the poorer groups almost never eat at a restaurant of any kind. The tenor of the discussion among a group of low-paid women is summed up by one who says ‘I never go; though I would love to go out for meals’. The members of the unskilled working-class group from South Wales also say they never go to restaurants:

Carol: We haven’t got money for restaurants. I haven’t been to one for years.

Tel: None of us have.

Tich: Anyway you’d have to get all ponced up. I couldn’t be arsed. I’d rather go to the chippy.

Indeed, they have fish and chips regularly, and Indian or Chinese take-away meals, ‘if we can afford it’.

Other working-class groups have a slightly wider experience. For example, a group of younger skilled manual workers who are friends and regular companions like Chinese, British (which they enumerate as steak, chicken, ribs or pub food) and Indian meals, the last especially after an evening of drinking. The men, at least, say they prefer going out for a curry to going to a restaurant. There is some apprehensiveness about not fitting in to restaurants. One woman says, ‘none of us wants to make a pillock of ourselves’, a point which is followed by a discussion of one group member having to go out to eat with a brother in a higher social position and feeling uncomfortable ‘in a really posh restaurant’ serving ‘posh food’ and having a sense that he was being told ‘Come on now, you’ve got to eat this properly’. To have appropriate levels of social and cultural competence and confidence remains a condition for the enjoyment of some kinds of eating out.

As one moves up the social class scale, experience becomes broader. The discussion among a group of the self-employed was brief, and perhaps worth recording for the stark contrast in orientation and preference:

Moderator: What about cuisines; is there any type of food you prefer?

Phillipa: Japanese.

Alessandro: Yes, Japanese.

Joanna: Organic – any cuisine, but organic, then it tastes, otherwise what’s the point?

Amber: I eat anything really – I don’t like Chinese food, I’ve gone off of it, but really anything. I don’t like German food, or Polish – all that stodge. I like Mediterranean food ...

- Amber:* But sometimes you want to eat out where everything is done in a special way, just right – something that you couldn't do at home.
- Joanna:* I'd rather have friends round and eat with them. A chef to come round – I'd like that, to have food you can't cook, but at home, it's relaxed.

Middle-class groups of South Asian descent exhibit some similarities. They eat out quite regularly, usually in convivial party mode with family. For example, a Pakistani man says 'I like going out with the family visiting restaurants', which he had done the previous weekend after a shopping trip. The focus group of middle-class Indians report eating Chinese and Mexican meals and pizza, but neither British nor Indian food. The reason for the last is that they could do better at home – 'you get your authentic thing at home for free and it's authentic'.

This evidence, unsystematic though it is, tells us something about the social organisation of eating out in the UK. Every group exhibits a knowledge of foreign cuisines, but different ones are mentioned at different levels of the social hierarchy. The implicit hierarchy of taste runs: from 'posh' restaurants and ones selling exotic foreign cuisine; through more popular foreign cuisines, especially Italian (including pizza to eat in) or slightly less usual ones like Mexican (recently fashionable but generally not expensive); via the pub or an Indian restaurant; by way of the fast-food restaurant (for pizza or burger); to take-away outlets – Indian and Chinese, fish-and-chip shops, and street stalls selling burgers. At every level of the occupational hierarchy some individuals, except within the minority ethnic groups, prefer British to foreign food. Yet hardly any group refers to the full range of this continuum, either for purposes of evaluation or to report their experience.

Working-class participants are less familiar with the routines of eating out, exhibiting some apprehensiveness, particularly among men, and in some ways struggling to reveal the rules or principles that govern whether they would eat out, and what they might prefer and why. The self-employed are more fluent, suggesting some prior reflection on their tastes and, more obviously, a preparedness and capacity to justify them. The middle class feel more at home in restaurants, and a wider range of restaurants lie within their field of vision and experience.

Thus, eating out mirrors our more general findings. It is a widespread activity, such that different social groups share a generic involvement. But when looked at in greater detail, eating out is differentiated by social group – by social class, where there is little overlap at opposite ends of the social spectrum, and by ethnicity and gender. Eating out is compartmentalised, differentiated by frequency, use of resources and preferences, particularly through the appreciation of many varieties of ethnic cuisine. While everybody eats out, they do not eat out in the same way.

While focus-group discussion of eating out revealed evidence of hierarchically patterned differentiation, household interviews suggested that eating at home

figures scarcely at all in the working of cultural capital. The topic was generally introduced through a question about preparation of the last main meal eaten at home on a weekday, and followed by inquiry about what was on the plate, who was there and where it was eaten. The overall impression is of widely shared ideals about household meals: they are important social events, which should be regular, serving freshly prepared and nutritious dishes, and eaten at table with opportunity for conversation. Above all, they are seen as important social rituals, where 'we all sit down together' (Molly) and 'I prefer to have a meal as a family, with no distractions' (Jenny). In practice, circumstances often prevent the ideal from becoming reality: pressure of work and school timetables, constraints on shopping, economy, living alone, the absence of a dining table, teenage tantrums and a desire to see particular television programmes, all disrupt the proper meal. Of the 17 households reporting whether they watch television during a meal, eight had done so yesterday and also implied that this is not exceptional. In addition, about a third of individual interviewees had not eaten around a table and a quarter had eaten meals which had not been cooked from scratch using some fresh ingredients. However, deviation from the norm caused little consternation or need for apology. Teri offers an instructive example of the degree of improvisation widely reported:

[Yesterday] I can't remember that far back! God!, we must have had something, what day was it yesterday, Thursday? I can't remember what we had. ... Oh, Nia [small daughter] went to Martin's [father living elsewhere], ah ha. I know what happened. We had a leaving lunch at work so I had a very big lunch and Nathan [son] had an afternoon off school so he had, he'd made toasted sandwiches, toasties just before I came in, so I made him cheese and biscuits and I had leftovers from the night before which was – ok, the night before we had had sausages, broccoli and potatoes. And Nathan was in a bad mood and didn't eat his, which is why I had them last night.

If any activity in our study is typified by the culture of the necessary it is domestic eating, but there is barely any difference between households with high and low cultural capital.

The meals described are almost all of one course, plus a drink and perhaps yoghurt, though more often for the children. Pudding is a rarity, with strong hints that sweets should be avoided because they are too pleasurable for everyday consumption. People talk as if they understand messages about healthy eating and to some degree care – people diligently recount the vegetables they prepare – but their behaviour is much tempered by circumstances. Children's preferences, making sure that everyone eats enough and personal tastes, are at least as prominent in the discussions. One or two interviewees with high cultural capital made some detailed reference to strategies for ensuring healthy eating. Vasudev Rehman, the older Indian man, rich in cultural capital, who lived alone, describes what he ate: 'Salmon, chicken, yoghurt and vegetables, fish and vegetables,

specially cooked with these sorts of spices, ginger ... they are very good for you.' He goes on to say:

... I am testing another grain called, oh – quinoa – it looks very good to me. It's a sort of grain, like rice, couscous, because the beauty of this is that it is carbohydrates as well as proteins.

More typical is an Afro-Caribbean man, Stafford, of similar age to Vasudev, who says of yesterday's dinner 'It was just meat and rice', following up after prompting with 'and broccoli and things like that you know, some vegetables. But I don't use much artificial seasoning you know'. There are, indeed, significant differences in food content between ethnic groups, with the white Britons most frequently recording steak, potatoes, cauliflower, broccoli and carrots.

Only one person, Cherie Campbell, refers to dieting, saying that she and her partner move on to an Atkins diet from January to September each year as compensation for eating whatever they like in the remaining months. Special diets otherwise described are mentioned by only two vegetarians and a professional sportsman needing to preserve 'a steady weight'. Conspicuous by its absence is any reference to aesthetic aspects of eating, or to its consequences for personal identity. The general tone is of mundane, routine, unreflective habitual behaviour, posing problems of practical management, rather than enthusiasm or anticipation of culinary pleasure. The dominant discourse is of logistics, of time constraints and routines; the next most prominent being about sociable togetherness. While there is a moral undercurrent to discussion of both appropriate social ritual and ensuring adequate nutrition, symbolic distinction finds little place in family dining.

9.6 Conclusion

Many crucial aspects of embodied cultural capital remain beyond the purview of our research. Nevertheless, we have learned enough about how bodily practices are incorporated into consumption patterns and everyday routines to see that they contribute to the marking of social position and schemes of social classification.

Different sports carry connotations of social position, limitedly in relation to watching sport, more in relation to participation. The most privileged people choose the rare sports. Also, men of higher social class put emphasis on the sociable aspects of sporting participation; it may well be that such people 'profit' socially from their participation in golf or squash. However, the main general effect of class appears not in terms of the symbolic identity of particular sports, but in the propensity to participate actively. Participating in sport and exercising frequently are strongly correlated with high occupational class positions. High education and extensive physical activity for the purposes of body maintenance go together; there is a general consistency between manifestations of institutionalised and embodied cultural capital.⁷ Body maintenance regimes are differentiated by class, a feature which is more pronounced among women than men.

Sport and exercise continue to separate men and women. Body practices construct distinctions of gender, making us first and foremost into men and women even if, thereafter, they permit secondary challenges to stereotypes by way of different versions of masculinity and femininity. Women dislike the importance attributed to sport, seen especially in their aversion to watching sport on television, but that is not paralleled by aversion to exercise. Women now participate in sport extensively, though across a comparatively narrow range. This might indicate some degree of exclusion but may instead be more a function of their different views of the purposes of exercise. Because women's primary objectives in exercising are fitness and relaxation, exercise for them is more a function of body maintenance than of engagement in the culture of sporting events and spectacles.

The educated middle classes, and especially professionals, adopt a distinctive attitude towards exercise, seeing it almost as a duty to assume personal responsibility for taking care of the body. Of course, sport and exercise not only have a part to play in general maintenance of a healthy body; they also affect appearance and play a role in presentation of self and self-identity. While some practices are mostly reserved for the middle classes, especially alternative therapies, body modification is more widely distributed across different segments of the population (see Crossley, 2005).

The other bodily practices that we have examined operate in ways which indicate possession of objective cultural capital. Eating out exhibits significant differences in participation, knowledge and taste between social groups. Experience of restaurants differs by class and by ethnic group especially. Expression of social position through clothing also shows differences, having also a very significant gender dimension. Without being able to inspect wardrobes, analysis is restricted to how people talk about their clothing, but the fact that a majority say that their tastes are for casual and comfortable clothes implies that informalisation is a powerful cultural tendency (Wouters, 1986). A minority prefers smart and fashionable clothes and they, at least, see this as symbolically important in their social engagements. Those with higher cultural capital differ most by making finer distinctions between the occasions that call for different types and styles of clothes, and by being a little more conscious of dress as a statement of personal identity.

Overall, we have strong evidence of the development of a symbolically significant body-maintenance culture. Fitness or honing of a good appearance is, as Bourdieu would have predicted, a primary objective. The body is heavily implicated in many and varied ways in the production and reproduction of economic and social capital. Through sport and exercise, diet, body management, modification and maintenance, people introduce and represent themselves and their social strategies and values to others. All these practices reveal significant social differences, which are laden with symbolic significance. The data reviewed above indicate that the exercised and cultivated body remains an instrument of social classification. Bodies display the insignia of unequal possession of cultural capital.

Resumé of Part III

Cultural fields: Tensions and dynamics

The chapters of Section 3 have deepened our understanding of specific cultural fields central to an analysis of cultural capital. The broad parameters of the cultural map discussed in Chapters 3 and 4 have been probed further, through survey questions about named works and artists, and testimony from focus groups and qualitative interviews. This rich array of material sets the scene for our analysis in Part IV, which will concentrate on the distribution of cultural capital and its articulation with social divisions.

We should note that the cultural fields examined in Chapters 5–9 are not necessarily organised, as Bourdieu defined them, in terms of contested position-taking around clear, substantive cultural boundaries. Our strategy has been to consider inductively whether tensions and stakes can be identified, partly by inquiring whether tastes and practices stand in opposition to each other, and partly by examining clusters of preferences and their internal structuring.

At one extreme lies body maintenance and management. Because this is comprised of a heterogeneous set of activities, it is difficult to talk of a field here, and certainly few oppositions are detectable within it. Even in the sphere of sport, which has historically been characterised by widely recognised differences between elite sports, such as tennis and golf, and popular sports, notably soccer, only modest differences can be detected. Instead a more pervasive and shared aspiration towards the ‘active body’ pertains. At the other extreme lies music, where tensions exist between a cluster of contemporary musical genres at one pole and classical music at the other. These are clusters which exhibit strong and distinctive oppositions that map on to social divisions of class, age, and ethnicity.

The other cultural fields fall in between. Visual art is the second most highly contested field, tensions arising between those who are assiduous in their pursuit of art – frequent gallery visitors and those who are especially keen on Renaissance and Impressionist painting – and those who are less likely to attend galleries and have less arcane tastes. Within reading there is a more complicated opposition between the large minority of active book readers on the one hand and those who read newspapers and magazines on the other. In the media field, tension exists between those who often go to the cinema, and those who rarely go, with a preference for the aesthetic genres or art and alternative cinema, *film noir*, and literary adaptations and costume dramas most distinguishing the tastes of the higher social classes.

In the case of television, the degree and kind of watching – a little rather than a lot, and attentively for educational purposes rather than for entertainment – are the strongest distinctions. Throughout, therefore, despite their diversity, we can see field-like properties.

These findings are reassuring in largely confirming the accuracy of the cultural map drawn in Chapter 3, which shows that music and visual art are most separated on the first two axes. However, we might add the rider that differences organised around taste, rather than participation, prove more central to ‘position-taking’ within these two fields. Thus, within music, the prime cleavage lies between liking contemporary and classical musical forms, a distinction apparent on the second axis. Yet participation is important. Those cultural practices that continue to expect attendance at fixed physical venues remain most powerfully organised around oppositions (see, generally, Savage *et al.*, 2005b). Participation is most distinguished in visits to museums and art galleries and in the ownership of art. Thus, in the two most contested fields, music and visual art, physical attendance at given performances or displays remains significant. With television and reading, by contrast, which normally occur in the home, fewer oppositions can be found, and wider and looser boundaries encompass legitimate forms.

One dimension along which tensions in each field revolve are different modes and mechanisms of production and reception. Listening to music at an orchestral concert differs as an experience from that in a night club, as does listening to recorded as opposed to digitally engineered music. This reflects a wider difference between the commercial production of contemporary music by record companies compared to the more publicly subsidised production of classical music. For reading, logics of production and reception vary between books and newspapers or magazines. In visual art, reception is differentiated between those who attend galleries and those who see pictures in other reproduction formats. Fields, then, are organised around an assemblage of personal, technical and institutional forms, a fact little appreciated in Bourdieu’s own analysis of field organisation in *Distinction*. This said, his later concerns with neo-liberal market incursions into the autonomy of cultural fields have resonance, for legitimate cultural forms, for example, classical music and museums of art, remain dependent on a public infrastructure.

In his later work, Bourdieu explored field dynamics in terms of a prime tension between dominant and dominated positions within a field, and amongst the dominant positions, between those obeying heteronomous and autonomous principles, in which the former depend upon access to other resources, especially economic capital, and the latter emphasise qualities specific to that field. This characteristically separated ‘industrialists’ from ‘intellectuals’, those who might purchase expensive paintings from those interested in the up and coming *avant-garde*. Can we apply these distinctions across British cultural fields, and if so, how?

In this regard, age matters. Different generations act as agents for particular institutional and technical forms. In general, the more age is implicated, the more contested is the field. This is especially true for the case of music, where class is

not especially strongly linked to differences between musical tastes (with some of the educated middle classes being predisposed both to classical music and rock, for instance), but is also evident for television. Interestingly, age is less relevant to the organisation of visual art and reading, both fields where digitalisation has had a less significant impact in challenging the dominance of printed material. These are also fields where powerful, often non-commercial, institutions, like museums and colleges, establish criteria of excellence and exert control over access.

It is not straightforward to identify in most fields a clear separation between traditional elite forms and popular forms. This division remains most important in the area of visual art, where an art-oriented middle class can be found, committed to celebrated painters associated with the European tradition stretching from the Renaissance to Impressionism, and ill-disposed to modern art. However, in music, classical composers attract little intense interest, even amongst those who like classical music. In reading, avid book readers consume all kinds of literature, ranging from modern literature through biographies and autobiographies to classics, and including, for female readers, romances. These observations confirm the analysis of Chapter 3 that it is hard to draw a distinction between 'elite' and 'popular' culture, if identified in terms of canonical forms appealing to an educated minority and popular works appealing to a mass market. In fact, visual art and reading (and to a lesser degree music) suggest that canonical works have become part of the 'mainstream': Picasso, Van Gogh, Jane Austen and Vivaldi are amongst the most popular of the named artists we inquired about. In part this is due to the way that their work now circulates so widely and no longer just within the specific field in which it originates: the popularity of Austen is no doubt due to television dramatisations, of Van Gogh and Picasso to their deployment within colour supplements, tourist brochures, poster reproductions and the like. In short, much of the historical canon now circulates widely and freely, allowing it to expand its audiences and become part of the background of cultural consumption. In Bourdieu's terms, the historical canon itself is now organised largely on heteronomous terms, having become part of a culture of mass reproduction.

Thus, the boundaries of legitimate culture have been redrawn by what might be termed the 'mass production' of culture. In all cultural fields we see a fundamental distinction between artists and cultural producers who are widely known and recognised, and those who are only known to a minority. Some artists become part of majority awareness owing to their wider circulation in numerous media. Others remain of minority interest, largely known only within their specific field. Legitimate culture, we might therefore speculate, extends beyond specialist expertise and appreciation of canonical figures within any one field (which may have been a concomitant of 'snob culture') and involves a more omnivorous orientation: the circulation of artists, genres and works between fields is recognised, but also critically questioned, as seen in the underlying orientation detected (in Chapter 4) in the narratives of the culturally engaged. Competence in culture now lies in the ability to appreciate the flow of forms between fields and the capacity of individuals to position themselves as critical observers of such flows.

These forces partly explain the contrast between more active, intense and versatile parts of the cultural field, defined in terms of new and emergent artists, and more 'casual' and 'relaxed' appropriations of the 'canon'. In music, most visibly, we contrast the young, enthusiastic and excited followers of rap, heavy metal and electronic music with people who seek to 'chill out' with classical and related forms. In the media field, we can distinguish between those who are keen cinema enthusiasts and those who are more inclined to relax in front of the TV. Not being seen to be couch potatoes drives elites and high professionals to avoid watching much television. The concern to pursue active body modification and sporting fitness now predominates in the embodiment arena.

The principles governing fields therefore seem different to those that Bourdieu elucidated. Rather than the intense areas within fields being defined in terms of a legitimate culture, which occupies the privileged location within the field, engaged zones are defined in terms of contemporary forms. The 'high ground' is associated with versatility and novelty. Old cultural forms are not dispensed with, because we have seen that there is extensive knowledge of old composers, writers and especially artists. However, these figures do not evoke a hallowed or consecrated tradition, but rather provide relaxed 'background'. A good example is the enthusiasm for modern literature and biographies, now central to the committed book reader, for whom acquaintance with the literary canon, whilst still present, is simply one element. The places of the new and the old within fields are inverted, with the dynamic and active positions defined in terms of their newness, sometimes linked to the agency of young people and new technological forms.

Concomitantly, there is little evidence of a distinctively *avant-garde* formation. In Bourdieu's terms, which largely accept the terms of engagement associated with the modernist literary, musical and artistic currents of the early and mid-twentieth century, the *avant-garde* competed with the traditional elites within the dominant sectors of cultural fields, seeking to critique traditional canonical forms in the name of the purity of cultural forms. Much has been written about the 'exhaustion of the *avant-garde*' in post-war conditions, especially in the context of the commercialisation and commodification of culture. There is little evidence of a clearly defined *avant-garde* operating in any of our fields. This may be due to the fact that such a small group is difficult to identify using our research methods, but it also reflects a broader re-ordering of cultural life subsequent to the eradication of a strongly institutionalised traditional formation with which *avant-gardes* might dispute. The most active agents we have examined in our cultural fields are not characterised by a concern to pursue a purist project of abstraction, but are instead more concerned to combine forms and genres in hybrid fashion.

Yet, if we do not detect a strong *avant-garde*, nor do we see a consistent set of strongly defined elite positions. As the interviews show, although elites are highly vested in several cultural fields, especially art and music, and in many cases are active in managing cultural organisations, they represent the tastes of an older generation. They watch little television, and listen to little or no contemporary music (rock from the 1960s and occasionally 1970s being the limit of their interest).

Their dispositions are mostly toward networking, rather than commitment to the cultural activity for its own sake.

In the light of the substantive and structural differences between fields and very variegated patterns of cultural taste, we use the final part of the book to explore the intersections between cultural practices and tastes, on the one hand, and social differences and inequalities on the other, in order to estimate the overall significance of cultural capital in the UK.

Part IV

The social dimensions of distinction

10 Cultural formations of the middle classes

10.1 Introduction

The middle classes play a key role in Bourdieu's account of cultural distinction, as chief beneficiaries of, and as main agents in, the reproduction of social and cultural dominance. When Bourdieu wrote *Distinction*, the majority of the population were routine workers in agriculture, industry and services, but over the past 50 years, the remarkable expansion of the middle classes – leaving aside issues of definition for the moment – has changed the balance of class relations, with the working class increasingly seen by many as a marginal rump, stigmatised and unvalued (Skeggs, 1997; Charlesworth, 2000; Savage, 2000). This process has been accompanied by accentuated income inequalities as an increasingly affluent middle class reaps the rewards of neo-liberal governance, leaving behind a more precarious working and intermediate class. Thus, the middle classes appear to 'self-exclude' themselves by living in exclusive areas, engaging in distinctive forms of consumption, and above all prioritising their own self-interest (Majima and Warde, 2007; Blokland and Savage, 2008).

This chapter explores the cultural formation of the contemporary middle classes, showing that it is rather different from that described by Bourdieu. We begin by rehearsing the main theoretical arguments concerning boundaries that separate the middle classes from other classes and internal divisions within their own ranks. Although the distinction between the cultured and the moneyed middle classes that Bourdieu discusses at length is not of prime importance, it can still be detected, notably on the fourth axis of our cultural map. We identify a relatively cohesive professional–executive class, but one defined less through its relationship to established, legitimate culture and more by its pluralistic versatility. The ability of these middle classes to deal reflexively with cultural classifications is fundamental to their social position.

The chapter unpicks some distinctive features of professional–executive class culture by engaging with the argument that the middle classes now have pluralistic tastes, and that an omnivorous orientation defines cultural capital today. There is considerable evidence for the importance of an omnivorous orientation amongst professional groups. Using focus groups and interviews, we argue that distinction now plays out through forms of knowingness and self-reflection. Rather than

differentiating themselves from the working class by their command of a fixed cultural canon, the educated middle classes seek to position themselves through demonstrating competence in handling a diversity of cultural products in a context where knowledge, information and media proliferate.

In the final section, we examine the self-proclaimed class identities of the middle classes, and the ways in which they explicitly talk about and refer to class and culture. Only the older middle classes retain a distinct status-oriented approach, whereby it is 'proper' for the respectable middle classes to like particular kinds of art and culture. The younger middle classes seek to throw off this stuffy image, embracing less socially divisive identities. Younger middle-class groups position themselves to move between classifications and genres. Despite only limited evidence for a self-conscious middle class, a pervasive and powerful middle-class cultural dominance exists. Rather than using a language of class to draw attention to its own superiority – which invites the possibility of contestation – the contemporary professional-executive class accepts its advantages while refusing any clear class identity.

10.2 The debate on the middle classes

In recent years, an intense debate has taken place between those who see the middle classes as fundamentally a conservative force, defending their privileges, or as a force for radical intervention. The former position has been argued most emphatically by John Goldthorpe (1980, 1995, 2007), who contends that a professional and managerial 'service class', comprising approximately one-third of the population, has become the bastion of the modern social order. This class depends on the material and symbolic rewards it can command from its employers by virtue of its expertise and role in management. This position leads it to defend the status quo. Although individual members of this service class may expound radical views, this is due to their individual circumstances or attributes, and not to their class position. Others have argued that the middle classes are dynamic 'change-makers', key actors in social transformation. This view can be traced back to Alvin Gouldner (1979), who saw well-educated professionals as part of a new class, which was able by virtue of its education to sustain a 'culture of critical discourse' questioning established social relationships. The role of the middle classes in protest movements and new social movements (Bagguley, 1995) has been taken as evidence of the radical potential of the well-educated to challenge the social order. Lash and Urry (1987) argued that the service class played an important role in 'disorganising' capitalism, and the role of the upwardly mobile as cultural intermediaries has been emphasized by Featherstone (1988).

Sociologists in the 1990s concluded that there were conservative and radical wings within the service class (Savage *et al.*, 1992; Butler and Savage, 1995). Savage *et al.* (1992) argued that there were structural divisions between a more 'cultured' group of professionals, and a wing of managers and executives. Using data from the post-war years up to the 1980s, they maintained that it was the professional middle classes who were more advantaged and self-recruiting, and

more vested in 'high culture', while those in managerial positions were often less secure and less distinctive in their cultural pursuits. This perspective drew upon Bourdieu's own account of middle-class relations, which offers a subtle reconciliation of these two perspectives.

Bourdieu argued that the prime divide in the middle class was linked to a divide between 'industrialists' and 'intellectuals'. The latter exemplified a 'pure' aesthetic, characterised by an embrace of the modernist concern with the dominance of form over function. This leads to an aesthetic of the modernist *avant-garde*, championed by the well-educated and artists, seeking the purity of abstraction. By contrast, the wealthy 'industrialists' 'incline towards a hedonistic aesthetic of ease and facility, symbolised by boulevard theatre or Impressionist painting' (Bourdieu, 1984: 176). This is the aesthetic of 'conspicuous consumption', of lavish display, repudiating everyday experience by embracing the leisurely and luxurious. Over certain issues, intellectuals and industrialists may make common cause,¹ united in their shared rejection of the everyday world of the popular and vulgar. However, when they feel less threatened by this plebeian world, and especially in their relations to each other, these internal tensions come to the fore. Hence, Bourdieu recognises the internal tensions within the middle classes, as they contest the relative power of economic and cultural capital, even whilst recognising that they ultimately have common interests as part of the dominant class.

Bourdieu drew on findings from his multiple correspondence analysis, which identified a first, most important, axis as one defined by the 'total volume of capitals' (hence setting apart the privileged from the subordinate), and the second axis by the 'composition of capital', where the well-educated, who are attuned to abstract cultural forms, stand in contrast to the wealthy hedonistic industrialists. Our cultural map differs in the respect that the second axis separates not the well-educated from the wealthy but the old from the young. This is a first step toward understanding the middle classes in the British context. Figure 3.5 suggests that the professional and managerial classes are relatively unified culturally and are not marked by a tension between an intellectual and an industrialist wing. Supplementary analysis shows that those with the highest incomes are arrayed on the right-hand side of the first axis, where they overlap with those with high educational qualifications (Le Roux *et al.*, 2007). Nor are these groups distinguished on the second axis. In the next section, we discuss whether our findings indicate that Goldthorpe is correct to identify a generally culturally uniform service class.

10.3 The British middle classes

Figure 10.1 returns to our cultural map, illuminating in different colours individuals in the four components of the 'service class' (blue for large employers and managers in large organisations; red for higher professionals; grey for lower professionals; and green for lower managers). Whereas the ellipses for the first three of these groups occupy a similar space, lower managers are different.

Although the rightward boundary of the ellipse for lower managers is close to that for professionals and high managers, its leftward boundary is much further left, with its mean point only slightly to the right of the vertical axis. In addition, we can see that the ellipse for lower managers is significantly flatter than for the other three groups. In fact, their ellipse is closer to that of the intermediate class, as careful inspection of Figure 3.9 shows. Given that senior managers are likely to be university graduates, and have often come from professional ranks, the tension between managers and professionals seems to have faded because the professional-executive class now holds sway in the privileged sectors of social space. Middle and lower managers have been downgraded by organisational restructuring, while well-educated professionals have been able to retain their prime positions in organisational and occupational hierarchies; as professional and managerial employment has expanded, cultural boundaries have been redrawn. This is a phenomenon that Bourdieu draws attention to in *Distinction*, as he notes the way that goalposts are moved as apparent prospects for upward mobility are opened up. Lower managerial jobs, which at one time might have given entrée into the secure world of the salaried middle class, no longer do this. In this respect, the class boundaries that most effectively map on to our cultural map are somewhat different to those informing Goldthorpe's concept of the 'service class' (see, more generally, Le Roux *et al.*, 2008). This is why we prefer the concept of the 'professional-executive class' in this book.

If the lower managers share the tastes of other fractions of the intermediate class, how are those tastes distinctive? Table 10.1 pulls together many of the differences

Table 10.1 Levels of participation and taste in selected activities, by class (percentages)

	<i>Professional- executive class</i>	<i>Intermediate class</i>	<i>Working class</i>	<i>Total</i>
More than 5 hours TV per weekday	8	22	33	24
Once a year or less to cinema	33	52	62	53
Read no books last year	8	13	27	19
Go frequently to night clubs	21	20	23	22
Go several times a year to opera	10	4	3	5
Never go to museums	15	33	50	39
Never go to musicals	19	35	60	31
Sometimes goes to opera	10	4	3	5
Never goes to orchestral concerts	42	64	80	67
Go to pub at least once a week	29	29	30	29
Soap opera, favourite TV programme	10	16	22	17
Sport, favourite TV programme	12	13	12	12
News/current affairs, favourite TV programme	24	19	14	18
Who-dunnits, favourite book	32	30	30	30
Modern literature least favourite book	26	39	56	44
Like classical music	43	31	25	31
Like urban (incl. hip-hop, R&B) music	17	17	19	18

in class practices we have examined in Part III. It shows that for some cultural practices, such as going to night clubs or pubs, there is no variation by social class, whereas for others, class differences are marked. For example, the professional-executive class is over three times more likely to attend orchestral concerts or the opera than the working class. However, even amongst the professional-executive class, only small minorities do these more legitimate activities, with cinema attendance, going to musicals, and attendance at art galleries and museums playing a more important role in distinguishing them from other classes. Only a small minority of the professional-executive class do not visit art galleries or museums compared to a large majority of the working class. This is all striking evidence of powerful class divisions in cultural practices. On the whole, the professional-executive class participates more in all practices than do the working class, with the main exception being watching television. Members of the working class are four times more likely to watch five hours of television or more each day than the professional-executive class.

Table 10.1 indicates that the level of engagement of the intermediate class falls between the professional-executive and the working class for every one of the selected activities. Intermediate class members are equidistant from the other two classes in their tastes for soap operas and news and current affairs on television. They watch a lot more television than the professional-executive class, but not as much as the working class and are also closer to the working class in avoiding museums and the opera, and in their relatively low taste for classical music. Their reading habits are more like those of the professionals. And for some practices there are no class differences – in pub attendance, watching sport on television or going to night clubs. The intermediate class thus engages with legitimate culture more than the working class and is in general more active, but to a lesser extent than the professional-executive class.

The principal results of our multiple correspondence analysis (MCA), as identified by the first axis, indicate that the professional-executive class is culturally distinctive but internally fairly homogeneous, implying that the tension identified by Bourdieu between the ‘cultured’ and ‘moneyed’ wings of the middle class is not much in evidence. However, it is not completely absent as inspection of the fourth axis indicates. To reiterate, this distinguishes a group of ‘voracious’ consumers from a group of ‘moderately’ engaged. Perhaps this is where we can identify a distinction between enthusiastic aesthetes and moderate hedonists? Figure 3.4 indicates the tastes of the voracious (at the bottom), which include liking modern and Renaissance art, world music, horror films and religious books, as well as extensive participation in legitimate culture events; and they do not like landscape paintings. At the top, by contrast, those more moderately engaged in legitimate culture also like club sports (such as golf), watching sport on television, soap operas and romantic fiction. They also reject some aspects of legitimate culture, for instance, Impressionist art, and arts programmes on television.

As we noted in Chapter 3, socio-demographic variables are unable to discriminate much between moderate and voracious participants. However, axis 4 does map on to specific occupational groupings within the professional-executive

class (NS-SEC).² Figure 10.2 plots various professional occupations on axes 1 and 4. All these occupational groups fall to the right of centre, as would be expected, with those generally requiring the highest educational qualifications falling furthest to the right. However, in addition, occupational groups are also distributed down the vertical axis. At the voracious pole (that is, in the south-east corner of the graph) lie higher-education teachers, media workers, artists and the old professions. By contrast, information technology and business professions are in the north east. Because the number of cases for many of these occupations is small, we should not treat the analysis as definitive. However, it suggests that cultural enthusiasm, especially for legitimate culture, concentrates among those in occupations specifically concerned with education and culture, while those in more instrumental and business-oriented professions are less fussed. This echoes the tension found by Bourdieu between industrialists and intellectuals, but it is weaker than the age and gender differentiation in taste exhibited on the second and third axes. Hence, whilst it is valuable to distinguish analytically economic from cultural capital, in contemporary Britain there is a great deal of interplay and ‘conversion’ between them.

10.4 Unravelling omnivorousness

The professional–executive class is not strongly divided culturally, despite its generational differences. How then should we understand its cultural orientations? It has been shown in many Western nations that the educated middle class has adopted a particular approach to the symbolic significance of culture. This orientation is not a form of snobbishness nor a stance of disinterestedness reflecting distance from the cares of everyday life, as Bourdieu (1984) described. Rather, it is an orientation towards cultural engagement that depends upon a reappraisal, by some, of the symbolic significance of cultural boundaries.

The term ‘cultural omnivore’ was coined by Peterson (1992) to address an anomaly observed in the evidence revealed by his work with Simkus (Peterson and Simkus, 1992), which showed that people of higher social status, contrary to elite-mass models of cultural taste, were not averse to participation in activities associated with popular culture. Indeed, high-status people were adding diverse practices and cultural forms to their cultural repertoire at an accelerating rate: they were omnivores because they were developing a taste for everything.

There are two definitions of omnivorousness, which we might call the *volume* and the *compositional* definitions. The first simply maintains that identifiable sectors of the population do and like more activities and things than others (Holbrook, Weiss and Habich, 2002). Peterson (2005: 264) notes that this is increasingly becoming the conventional operational definition. However, volume measures alone do insufficient justice to the rationale for the earlier studies, which suggested that some distinctive status orientation is entailed in the patterns of cultural preferences involved. Peterson and Simkus (1992: 252) suggested that ‘the aesthetics of elite status are being redefined as the appreciation of all distinctive leisure activities and creative forms along with the appreciation of the classic

fine arts'. This replaces an old arrangement whereby elite status was associated with snobbery:

As highbrow snobbishness fits the needs of the earlier entrepreneurial upper-middle class, there also seems to be an elective affinity between today's new business-administrative class and omnivorousness.

(Peterson and Kern, 1996: 906)

There is also a hint that such omnivorousness is a sign of greater tolerance and democratisation, but without implying that this is a matter of 'liking everything *indiscriminately*'; it consists rather in 'an *openness* to appreciating everything'. Peterson, then, has conceived of omnivorousness 'as a standard of good taste' (Peterson, 2005: 264), involving 'tastes that crossed class, gender, ethnic, religious, age and similar boundaries' (Peterson, 2005: 260). Hence, to abandon reference to the compositional dimension of omnivore taste cannot be entirely satisfactory, for the concept's critical edge resides partly in its specific cultural content.

To explore this topic, we ask whether the professional-executive class does more and likes, if not everything, most things and, to the extent that this is the case, whether it is evidence of the prevalence of omnivores within the middle class.

We used survey responses on participation and taste to construct scales measuring extent of engagement across a range of activities. We selected 27 activities to construct a scale of participation, covering a wide range of cultural and recreational activities, some very popular like eating out and watching television, others minority activities like bingo and opera. The activities are diverse but not subject to obvious bias by concentration within particular fields or over-emphasis of minority pursuits. The scale was normally distributed, with the lowest score 3, the highest 27 and the median 18. Cross-tabulation of score with gender, occupational class, educational qualifications, ethnic identity and age produced statistically significant measures of association. We then applied logistic regression analysis to explore these relationships more closely and identify the social bases of cultural omnivorousness (by volume). The independent variables were: our three class categories; education with five categories, identified by highest qualification; self-identified ethnicity; and age, measured by year plus an age squared measure to register potential decrease in participation among the elderly. We also explored the relevance of population density, income, household type and region.

The regression analysis produced a powerful model explaining over a third of the variance in the score for participation (see Table 10.2). Education is the most powerful factor, with a monotonic increase in extent of engagement for each level of increase in qualification. There is a significant increase in magnitude in the association among those holding a degree. Breadth of participation increases with age, but tapers off among the elderly. Compared with Londoners in the sample, the inhabitants of the Midlands and the South participate less extensively but, all other things considered, those in Wales participate significantly more. When compared with couples without children, people living in single-person households, in couple households with dependent children and in multi-family households participate

Table 10.2 Factors influencing respondents' volume of participation: OLS (ordinary least squares) coefficients of regression

	<i>B</i>	<i>Standard error</i>	<i>Beta (standardised)</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
(Constant)	13.48	0.98		0.00
<i>Education</i>				
GCSE, CSE, O-level, NVQ/SVQ level 1 or 2	2.37	0.30	0.21	0.00
RSA/OCR Higher Diploma, City & Guilds Full T	3.17	0.36	0.21	0.00
GCE A-level, Scottish Higher Grades, ONC	3.91	0.36	0.28	0.00
University/CNAA Bachelor Degree, Master Degree/PhD/DPhil	5.23	0.35	0.47	0.00
Other qualifications	0.87	0.76	0.02	0.25
<i>Age</i>				
Age	0.16	0.03	0.58	0.00
Age squared	-0.002	0.00	-0.65	0.00
<i>Region</i>				
North	-0.48	0.40	-0.04	0.24
Midlands	-0.84	0.41	-0.07	0.04
Southern England	-0.71	0.39	-0.07	0.07
Wales	1.25	0.57	0.07	0.03
Scotland	-0.57	0.61	-0.03	0.35
Northern Ireland	-0.59	0.71	-0.02	0.41
<i>Type of household</i>				
Single person household	-1.03	0.29	-0.08	0.00
Unrelated adults household	0.02	0.38	0.00	0.97
Couple dependent children	-1.43	0.29	-0.13	0.00
Couple non-dependent children	-0.50	0.43	-0.03	0.24
Lone parent dependent children	-0.73	0.53	-0.03	0.16
Lone parent non-dependent children	-0.69	0.58	-0.03	0.23
Multi-family	-2.52	0.60	-0.09	0.00
<i>Social class</i>				
Professional-executive	1.93	0.30	0.17	0.00
Intermediate	1.29	0.24	0.12	0.00
Never worked	-1.26	0.62	-0.04	0.04
<i>Sex</i>				
Male	-0.73	0.20	-0.08	0.00
<i>Ethnic origin</i>				
White – other British/Irish	-0.96	0.41	-0.08	0.02
White – other	0.55	0.58	0.02	0.34
Other origin	-3.26	0.43	-0.18	0.00
Number of cases	1564			
R square	0.38			
Adjusted R square	0.37			

Notes

^a Dependent variable: scale of participation.

Baseline categories: level of education: no education qualifications; region: London; type of household: couple no children; social class: working class; sex: female; ethnic origin: white-English.

significantly less. There is also a monotonic effect of social class. The professional–executive class participate most, and those who occupy intermediate occupations participate significantly more than working-class people. The effect of gender is significant, indicating a tendency for women to participate more widely. Finally there is a very substantial effect of ethnic status; belonging to the category ‘other’, that is, not white, reduces very much the level of participation, but interestingly so does being ‘white Celtic’, a category that combines identification as Scottish, Irish and Welsh. It is thus clear that levels of participation are substantially affected by the socio-demographic characteristics of individuals. Education and class have strong independent effects. Participation is related to social position and resources.

We conducted a similar analysis of a scale of taste, looking not at what respondents do but at what they say they like.³ Repeating the statistical procedures described above, we were able to construct a model that explained only 15 percent of the variance. In general the significant relationships between independent variables and the scale scores for liking are similar to those for participation, but weaker. As before, it is the most highly educated, those with a degree, who have the largest number of likings. However, the effect of education varies between different domains. Graduates like the greatest number of musical genres, musical works and artists. But they do not like the most genres of books, nor the most film directors, nor the most televised events. Class is also generally a determinant, with the higher social classes exhibiting greatest breadth, but that effect is only pronounced in relation to artists and musical works. Overall, class is not very important, with no significant difference between the professional–executive and intermediate classes, though those in manual occupations are significantly less likely to have many likes. Region, by contrast, is more significant, suggesting perhaps that the fashion cycle, or perhaps just the availability of a greater variety of easily encountered cultural goods and services, is more intense in London. There is an ethnic group effect throughout, with the non-white group being more catholic in its tastes, as measured by genres of book and music, but more restricted than the rest when measured by named works. Gender matters a little and there is an age effect, but it is not very strong, with the oldest groups having the narrowest tastes. So, class (and also education and ethnic origin) is less closely bound to omnivorousness of taste than it is to participation.

Hence, as has been shown for other countries like the US (Peterson and Kern, 1996), the Netherlands (Van Eijck and Bargeman, 2004), and Spain (Sintas and Álvarez, 2002), when considered by volume, there is a tendency for those with more educational qualifications and those belonging to higher social classes to be multiply engaged and to like a large number of items.

As regards composition, almost inevitably, given that members of the professional–executive class do more and like more, they engage with many forms of culture, popular and legitimate, as the omnivore thesis asserts. Indeed, the professional–executive class is sometimes as strongly engaged in apparently popular activities as are members of other classes (see Table 10.1 and also

Table 11.1). An optimistic view of this would be that more diverse tastes transcend or demolish cultural boundaries. They are as likely as the working class to go frequently to the pub or to like to watch the soccer World Cup on TV. The educated classes are at least as widely exposed to popular culture as other classes, but apparently without fear of reducing their cultural capital as a result of liking popular culture. However, as indicated in previous chapters, there continue to be subtle divisions that middle-class omnivore taste rarely crosses. It is precisely because our data is sensitive enough to allow these complex boundaries to be discerned that we question the extent to which the forms of middle-class versatility and openness associated with the omnivore thesis should be taken at face value.

Qualitative data help considerably in unpacking the nature, and the limits of, this embrace of diversity. Many people, especially among the more highly qualified, told us, in interviews and focus groups that they like many, if not all, kinds of music and paintings. It has become something of a badge of honour, a matter of personal pride, to be versatile in preferences across many cultural forms. It is a valued orientation, distancing the middle class from accusations of snobbery or exclusiveness, as well as being consistent with the way in which culture is consumed. This is illustrated in our interview with James Foot.

In his late 30s, working as a university lecturer, James discusses 'exciting times' in a clear evocation of cultural openness as a new, beneficial and 'really positive' result of processes of social change signifying the demise of rigid hierarchies and structures. He specifically articulates this in terms of the students he encounters. Reflecting his strong agreement with the statement 'the old snobbery that was once associated with culture has all but disappeared', he suggests:

James: I think it's exciting times, really. Sort of postmodern culture and everything, I think things are very eclectic and, you know, there are a mixture, I think it's, I think, I think that's really positive, actually.

Interviewer: A mixture that would appeal to all sections?

James: Yes, yes. I think there's great access to things as well which I think is, you know? Really exciting.

Interviewer: Such as? Because you'll probably know more than me about this.

James: [Mutual laughter] Yes, I suppose that with the Internet and things like that, you know? So much information there and, you know, with, and again with music, things like that and I suppose something I find with my students, I mean, some of my colleagues at times think 'Oh, this seems very sort of limited' and I don't think they are, actually. I think they've got very broad tastes and, you know, there was a time when, you know, there were fashions that the students stuck to, but I think now, there's a whole range and anything goes. They're actually very tolerant of different styles.

In keeping with his position as an academic and cultural intermediary, he personally espouses a reflexive understanding of the benefits of openness that resonates strongly with the distinctive orientations of omnivorousness as initially

proposed by Peterson and adopted by most subsequent scholars. He professes openness to all types of music, described by him as a requirement of his role in teaching the dramatic arts. Also, he has a discerning approach to genre.

Yet it is also clear that there are cultural territories James would definitely not enter. Although he likes jazz, he makes it clear that he does not 'like Dixieland jazz'. He similarly distinguishes between the classical music programme of BBC's Radio 3 and the commercial channel Classic FM, which he describes, somewhat pejoratively, as 'chocolate box music'. He is clear that he does not like urban music, even musing that 'I'm a bit out of touch'. Although he is enthusiastic about what he calls 'modern' music, it is not clear what this includes, and it is also interesting to note that he then talks about how this could be useful for his teaching. He very clearly does not like soap operas or reality TV. He warmly embraces the films of Ingmar Bergman, but has no time for that 'Bridget Jones stuff. I've got no interest in seeing that'. So, although Peterson and other scholars would rightly recognise James as an omnivore, we need to note that there are limits to this orientation as there are certain kinds of 'common' cultural activities which James clearly eschews.

On the basis of survey responses, we identified eight people among our household interviewees who could be considered omnivores by virtue of volume.⁴ They were identified as omnivores if they were in the top quartile of two of our three scales for volume of participation, knowledge and likes. James is one of these. Others besides James transgress cultural boundaries, liking rare, legitimate items and popular ones and they can be identified on Figure 10.3, which records axes 1–4 in the cloud of individuals.. For example, Jenny likes modern literature and Eminem's *Stan*, while Cherie likes the Mexican artist Frida Kahlo and the animated comedy *South Park*. Note that Jenny, Cherie and James are all employed professionally in culture industries, as writer, tour guide and humanities lecturer, respectively. However, by contrast, Poppy, who is also omnivorous on a measure of volume, is culturally unassuming. Whilst sharing characteristics of class and educational experience, and reporting equally high levels of participation in the survey, she professes tastes firmly within the popular mainstream. Although she could recognise some of the rare, legitimate items, she does not claim to like any. She chooses recent best-selling books (the biography of the comedian Billy Connolly, *The Da Vinci Code*), popular television programmes, established rock or pop artists, such as Robbie Williams, or Hollywood films as her preferred cultural forms. Such choices partly reflect the relative lack of opportunities for cultural engagement beyond those easily on offer within the home, or through the media, on a day-to-day basis, for she lives away from major metropolitan centres in a northern market town. She demonstrates little sense of adventure, or of connection with specifically high cultural forms, or of critical appropriation of the popular. Her openness to diversity does not translate, as it does with others like James, into any distinctive form of engagement. Instead a picture emerges of the general activities and attitudes of the educated middle-classes, whose everyday interests and concerns lie not with cultural engagement but are rather focused on issues of family life, career development and security.

Careful analysis of the meanings of cultural involvement of the most highly engaged individuals suggests several *different* orientations towards cultural involvement (see Bellavance, Myrtille and Ratte, 2004). Michèle Ollivier (2008), on the basis of evidence of French Canadians, argued that there are several types of omnivore – humanist, populist, practical and indifferent – varying in their preferences for high, middle and lowbrow culture, and in their attachments to practical rather than cultural pastimes, and by the degree of their concern with arts or crafts. She described the underlying attitude behind these different orientations as one of ‘openness to diversity’. Our evidence too suggests the existence of different types of orientation and thus cautions against postulating the existence of ‘the omnivore’ as a singular figure on the contemporary cultural landscape (see Warde, Wright and Gayo-Cal, 2007 for an alternative classification of professional, dissident, apprentice and unassuming omnivorous orientations).

As we have indicated, even though those scoring highly on omnivore scales record both more likes and fewer dislikes than the remainder of the population, they do exhibit dislikes, and these are often highly telling. Examination of specific dislikes reveals some predictable shared dislikes of popular cultural forms. Both Cherie and Caroline are vehemently critical of fast food. Poppy, Caroline and Cherie think some forms of music like rap and electronic dance music unintelligible – and noisy. Jenny dislikes daytime television chat shows. She also shares with James a general disapproval of reality television, the television genre consistently disliked by our ‘omnivore’ interviewees. The interviews took place during the broadcast of two particularly prominent examples of this genre, *I’m a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here*⁵ and *Big Brother*, both of which Jenny refers to:

Jenny: Oh the *I’m a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here* things, I never ever watch that and I never watch the *Big Brother*, is that what it was called? I never watched anything like that. Well I might have seen an episode or two of *Big Brother* but just enough to avoid it.

Interviewer: And what would be a turn off?

Jenny: I just find them really, I don’t know, it’s difficult, I find them really boring, I think they’re humiliating as well. I’m trying to think now why do I like soaps but not that. Soaps are better scripted than *Big Brother* I think. Maybe it’s an age thing as well, I don’t know. I find them a bit humiliating.

Jenny has seen these programmes – her ‘is that what it’s called?’ is perhaps something of a weak attempt to mark her distance from a programme which is so visible in contemporary British culture as to be unavoidable – but just enough to know that they are not for her. Exercising her skills of discrimination, she recognises an imagined lack of consistency in her preference for soaps, another item which might be similarly considered mass culture, which she considers better ‘scripted’ than reality television, using an opportunity to express her expertise as a writer.

If the more omnivorous tend to dislike specific non-legitimate items, they also, like James, have a higher proportion of legitimate items in their portfolios. Appearance in the lower right quadrant of Figure 10.3 indicates that they are likely to be both highly educated and to participate heavily in public performances and displays of legitimate culture. Interviews with such individuals confirm the impression. So, while wide participation does not necessarily entail extensive consumption of legitimate culture, in many cases among the professional-executive class it does. As we discovered in Chapter 3, the professional-executive class continues to be much more likely to prefer legitimate culture. Its members regularly visit historic sites and attend events which are symbolically coded as legitimate – theatre, opera, concerts, museums. They may now have wider tastes in addition, but command of consecrated culture remains a token of distinction which probably has not yet ceased to function as an effective form of cultural capital. They also express some tell-tale dislikes of popular forms. So, because their preferences are disproportionately within the realm of legitimate culture, it seems likely that their pluralism contains the elements of distinction rather than being an expression of pure tolerance.

Most distinctive among our interviewees are cultural intermediaries with a professional interest in, although not necessarily an enthusiasm for, some but not all areas of popular culture. Their traits most closely instantiate the core definition of the omnivore. Other types, with significantly different meanings, coexist. Whether all obtain equal practical or symbolic advantage is very debatable. In sum, an openness to diversity is probably socially profitable, and is certainly economically profitable for those for whom it is a professional commitment, but otherwise it may be culturally rather undistinguished.

Openness to diversity is now widely dispersed among the higher echelons of the middle class, and it has become *de rigueur* to refrain from condemning or disparaging the tastes of other social groups. This has been made possible because of an engagement with and appreciation of many aspects of popular culture. (Whether this is an insincere affectation – as suggested by Walden, 2006 – is arguable.) But it has not resulted in the diffusion of high culture downwards. Legitimate culture remains heavily the property of the professional-executive classes. The critical theoretical question is then whether command of legitimate culture still carries with it social and material benefits.

Our elite interviews suggest that command of legitimate culture does still profit people in the highest echelons of society. The 11 people from the British professional-executive elite prove to be more homogeneous in practice and taste than might reasonably have been anticipated. Nearly all of them are actively engaged with classical music, and especially opera. Universally they express interest in the visual arts and go to art galleries regularly, with visits to famous galleries in other countries part of their itineraries when on holiday and when travelling abroad for work reasons. Participating by attending live performances or visiting cultural sites is an especially prominent feature of their behaviour – all activities that we might reasonably describe as key elements of legitimate culture in Britain. They also share other elements of lifestyle, which, while not necessarily

so symbolically distinctive, indicate a shared set of practices and values in the cultural domain. All travel a lot, most have second homes, all but one eat out very regularly, all are members of cultural organisations and most hold positions of authority in voluntary associations. While some of the above appear almost to be obligatory for people in the sort of positions that they held, there are also some equally significant, if more optional, commitments (for more detail, see Warde and Bennett, 2008).

A second key feature of the cultural activities of these individuals is the extent of their investment in cultural activities. This arises partly as a function of their work. Many of their cultural visits and engagements are with colleagues or clients, including cultural activities organised by firms for public relations or commercial purposes. However, frequency of attendance at concerts and visits to theatres and galleries is far above the British norm, and also well above the norm for those holding equivalent levels of institutional cultural capital. They are truly voracious, particularly in respect of participation in legitimate cultural activities. Though probably not cultural omnivores on the basis of the composition of their tastes (they often avoided activities symbolic of popular taste, though mostly without disparaging or claiming to dislike the culture of groups less elevated in the social hierarchy), in terms of volume of engagement, these are highly active people across the range of legitimate *and* mainstream culture.

If no one else does, the powerful seem to believe that command of legitimate culture is a worthwhile form of investment. Their cultural portfolios are heavily loaded towards the inclusion of traditionally legitimate cultural items, particularly in the visual art field. They also appear to accord cultural capital value, partly because it generates social capital – personal introductions, jobs after retirement, invitations on the social circuit to opera, access to positions in voluntary associations all seem intimately woven together through their cultural participation. These would seem to be exactly the conditions for the operation of distinction, in the terms proposed by Bourdieu. However, the picture is somewhat complicated when we consider newer forms of culture, like television and cinema, where tastes are much more popularly shared. The image of an upper middle class repelled by the tastes of lower classes, of rejecting them as vulgar or demeaning, is not overtly apparent. They do enunciate occasional dislikes – of reality television, watching too much television and, in one instance, of the cinema – but only one person gives any evidence of the sort of snobbery that once associated popular taste with social inadequacy. Indeed, the elite hold particularly strongly to the tolerant cultural attitudes that are now common among the educated liberal professional and managerial classes. More significant perhaps is their failure to engage with contemporary music, modern art and American cinema, probably largely a feature of their age and generation, though it could be read as a defence of the most legitimate and orthodox cultural items. It is for this reason that we suggested, in reviewing Part II, that our elite sample cannot be said to typify elite fractions within the class as a whole. We would expect younger elites to be much less invested in legitimate culture and to be more open to the kinds of border-crossing practices associated with the ways in which electronic media have restructured both the internal organisation of cultural fields and the relationships between them.

10.5 Middle-class identification

How then, do the middle classes, with their voracious cultural interests and subtle cultural boundaries, see themselves? Clearly, to identify themselves explicitly as middle class might involve evoking snobbish attitudes which they would find anathema (see, generally, Savage, Bagnall and Longhurst, 2001; Savage 2007). Table 10.3 reports findings on unprompted and prompted class identity.⁴ Only one-third of the sample 'normally think of themselves as belonging to a social class', a figure somewhat below that found in other surveys (see, for instance, Heath, 2007, where 45 percent normally saw themselves as belonging to a social class). Higher professionals are the only group where more than half spontaneously think of themselves as middle class. However, only just over a quarter give themselves an unprompted middle-class identity. In fact, a quarter see themselves as working class. The large employers are somewhat less likely to give themselves an unprompted class identity, but report higher levels of middle-class identification overall. The lower professionals and the lower managers are only slightly more likely to report middle-class identities than the sample as a whole. None of the three constituent groups of the professional-executive class exhibits a strong, overt, middle-class identity.

Table 10.3 Class identity by occupational group (percentages)

	<i>Any unprompted class identity</i>	<i>Unprompted middle-class identity</i>	<i>Prompted or un-prompted middle-class identity</i>
Employers	40	27	70
High professionals	50	29	60
Low professionals	33	21	49
Low managers	32	20	50
All sample	33	15	39

Source: Q432: Do you think of yourself as belonging to any particular social class? (Yes/No) = 'unprompted class identity'.

Q433: If you had to choose one from this list, which social class would you say you belong to? = 'prompted class identity'.

List: 1, lower working class; 2, working class; 3, upper working class; 4, lower middle class; 5, middle class; 6, upper middle class; 7, upper class; 8, none of these. Middle class = 4 – 6.

Do the middle classes pretend to efface class? To some extent. People still do talk about class, and on occasions, stereotypical contrasts in class behaviour are invoked. Thus Jos, in a focus group of older middle-class people, says:

middle-class people tend to differ because the majority of middle-class people have had the advantage of having an education which very often has led to them leaving home when they are in their late teens and looking after themselves out there in hostel lodgings, whereas the average working-class lad goes straight out to work and mummy is still there, mum is still there at home, even if she's at work too, having the supper ready when he gets in. The first time he goes away from home is when he gets married.

Also focus groups sometimes elicit lively reflection and intense feelings. In most cases, however, the feelings engendered are mediated through consideration of the politics of classification, through reflections on the way that people are 'classed' institutionally and through representations. This evokes ambivalences about whether to appeal to, or reject, the pertinence of class as a label. This works out in sometimes surprising ways. The lesbian focus group talks at some length about class, not as a fixed category, but as a kind of lifestyle, as something that one can in part (though only in part) put on and take off. There is a knowing reflection on what kinds of activity are proper for middle class and working class:

Ali: I'm quite middle class actually you know. I'm like from a working-class background but you know I go to university you know I listen to Radio 4, I like classical music and jazz blah, blah, blah, you know I do karaoke as well, but you know my they're tastes like when I'm myself my tastes are quite similar to tastes of my family or tastes I was brought up with. I don't feel snobby about other people's choices about that. I just know what I like for myself.

Rani: I mean I feel I'm caught between two stools. I mean I suppose technically I'm bourgeois but can't bear bourgeois tele' and I can't bear bourgeois cultural stuff that's served up for me in terms of me or if it's not relevant and it's certainly not contemporary. And if I then look at what's considered rubbish TV. I like *The Royale Family* because it is fantastic social comment. *EastEnders* and things like that and *Coronation Street*, however vulgar, everybody thinks that they are, people tune on for some reason. Not just for escapism but we've got a class distinction in this country.

Both Ali and Rani reflect a level of unease about making judgments about cultural taste, seeing it as redolent with intimations of social prejudice, which need to be handled with care even while affirming their liking for particular popular cultural items.

The Afro-Caribbean middle-class focus group elicits the most talk about class. The moderator's notes make it clear how sensitive a topic class is amongst this group, since historically they had strongly identified with being working class and found the idea that they might be middle class somewhat threatening. This led to a strong articulation of the relationship between class and ethnicity by Angela:

Yes, yeah, my parents were, without doubt, of working-class background and I went to a girls' grammar school in a very nice area of (a Midlands town) and I went on to quite a nice sixth form and then I got into Oxford, so there was kind of quite a spread in terms of my life experiences based from (a Midlands town) through to university and then entering the law and I guess that I've made my own personal decisions about what I, what I take on and

what I don't. And I feel quite lucky in that I feel I understand um some middle class. I mean I know that I'm classed as middle class now because of my occupation but certain things would have been lost on me, I think, if I hadn't had the experience that I have of the educational system. Like, right, I know when a white middle-class person is being condescending and ironic towards me um and I know that I've worked with colleagues who haven't had that experience who don't necessarily know that they're being treated in a condescending subtle. It's just that thing, I think, that goes with certain types of people, certain types of values and I'm black that I've got, I think the tools to pick up on some of those and to work out how I'm going to deal with them, whether it's by kissing my teeth, if I feel so, not in the work environment but in a different type of environment, or if it's responding to a person in the same slightly condescending way but which they understand that I know what's going on and I'm not going to be treated in that way.

It is not incidental that the Afro-Caribbean middle classes show a particularly clear understanding of the politics of classification. What matters to the middle classes is not the idea that they are overtly middle class (by and large, what we see is a middle class 'dis-identification from class', to echo, yet invert, Skeggs, 1997), but rather that they can recognise and manipulate the very classifications that are used to 'class' people. By recognising this politics of classification, people can present themselves as outside any specific class. This finding is in line with other work demonstrating how contemporary class identities are powerfully organised around the manipulation of classifications, so that people try to emphasise their hybridity or mobility between classes (Savage, Bagnall and Longhurst, 2001; Savage, 2007). Yet at the same time, and this is the important point, such identities require and reproduce classifications and idioms of class.

10.6 Conclusion

We have shown that the professional-executive class is most powerfully marked by its tendency for extensive cultural engagement. Participation in cultural activities in public is perhaps its most distinctive feature. But its members also express more positive preferences than other social groups; their tastes transcend traditional hierarchical cultural boundaries and embody reflexive and self-aware practices.

We have argued that the service class, as defined by Goldthorpe, is in fact fractured along cultural lines. Whereas senior managers and large employers share practices and tastes with professionals, junior managers are more closely aligned culturally to the intermediate class. This is a function of the changing role of the university degree in the middle-class career, where executives and professionals are equally likely to have had a university education. Since educational experience is the principal sources of cultural capital, it is perhaps unsurprising that both groups exhibit similar patterns. Moreover, as the educational system becomes the principal mechanism for attaining access to middle-class jobs, it is no longer necessary to contrast an aesthetic with a plebeian culture so as to valorise the

former. In the routine workings of the education system, anything that is valued within it can become part of the cultural canon, and anything becomes potentially valuable within its remit.

While patterns of taste are broadly similar within the professional-executive classes, there are important age differences. The young appreciate a different set of cultural forms than do their elders, and are less attached to traditional legitimate genres like classical music and Impressionist art. Cultural intermediaries are especially enthusiastic consumers of culture, and are perhaps most likely to exhibit a prototypical cultural omnivore profile, with tastes spanning hierarchical boundaries. However, omnivorous orientations are evident throughout the whole class. This has resulted in the more or less total elimination of hints of snobbishness or expressions of condescension towards other social classes accompanying a greater attachment to popular culture. We have seen how popular culture is not embraced wholeheartedly in all its manifestations, but it is unusual to deprecate popular culture in general or *in toto*. There remain hints and echoes of older attitudes that associate good and bad taste with class position, and the professional-executive class are particularly likely to hold up a mirror to their own behaviour, which results in them feeling ashamed, embarrassed or disappointed that they might prefer entertainment to personal self-development: they don't like country and western music; they think watching lots of television is somehow decadent; and they are more convinced that the old snobbery continues to pertain than are other classes, thereby apparently recognising that culture can be a tool of social positioning and that people might make social judgments on the basis of aesthetic preferences.

In sum, culture matters to the middle classes, and even more so to its higher echelons. Objective and institutional cultural capital act as valued resources, without being exclusively expressed through command of legitimate culture. Rather, the required orientation is towards reflexive appropriation, in a spirit of openness, of a diversity of cultural products, but this continues to produce subtle boundaries beyond which it is not respectable to trespass.

11 Culture and the working class

11.1 Introduction

When Bourdieu was writing *Distinction*, it was still widely imagined that European working-class movements – trade unions, socialist and social-democratic parties, previously successful in improving pay and working conditions, in extending political rights like the vote, and social rights like health care, education and social security benefits – might yet recast capitalist institutions. Solidarity, seen as the key to the gate of the proletarian paradise, was correspondingly central to social science research agendas. The advance of neo-liberalism since the 1980s and the collapse of the communist regimes of Eastern Europe after 1989 buried this vision of paradise; and perhaps also its key. Thereafter, sociology was impelled to revise its interpretation of the working class.

Many sociologists, ceasing to anticipate solidarity in pursuit of collective interests, argued that the cohesion of the working classes was diminishing. The economic underpinnings of class mobilisation were eroded as ‘post-materialist’ concerns about quality of life and the environment took over (Offe, 1985); distinctive cultures based upon class dissolved (Turner, 1988; Pakulski and Waters, 1996); and political action ceased to revolve around class organisations or class interests (Pahl, 1993). Not all agreed. The contrary position, that class differences are, empirically, much the same as before and that their consequences for social life are as strong as ever, was put most succinctly by Gordon Marshall and John Goldthorpe (1992), who argued that the best available empirical research showed very little change in the statistical relationship between class position and, for example, voting behaviour, educational opportunity and social mobility.

The controversy turns partly on what the working class was actually like in the past. Sociological accounts can be differentiated in terms of the positions they take up in relation to an image of the traditional proletarian. This was associated with a positive, sometimes nostalgic and romantic, description of working-class life and culture as something noble, with its own distinctive cohesive structure and moral integrity. The classic account of the Yorkshire coal-mining community by Dennis, Henriques and Slaughter (1956), portrayals of Hunslet in Leeds by Richard Hoggart (1958), or of working-class life in Bethnal Green in London by Peter Young and Michael Willmott (1957), presented a working-class

way of life that was hard, involving sometimes gruelling paid manual labour, especially for men, and domestic drudgery and financial anxiety for women, but which was nevertheless rewarding in its camaraderie at work, neighbourliness and cooperation in residential communities and its collective sense of dignity and independence. Everyday life for the industrial working class generated a degree of social solidarity that had had, in trade-union organisation and support for left-wing parties, and might again have, political repercussions in movements for greater material equality and social justice.

The prevalence of this working-class way of life was challenged strongly in the 1960s. Pre-eminent was the *Affluent Worker* study of factory workers in an expanding town in south England. This demolished the then popular *embourgeoisement* thesis – the argument that, because of their growing affluence, members of the working class were adopting middle-class aspirations and norms (see Goldthorpe *et al.*, 1968a, 1968b, 1969). The authors' claim that they had found a new working-class image of society, that of the privatised and instrumental worker, while perhaps true of the sample in Luton, proved hard to confirm in other situations. Critics also pointed out that the working class had probably always been instrumental, and the meaning of privatisation was shown to be ambiguous.

Subsequent re-examination of the project's interview schedules (Savage, 2005) concluded that, even among the workers of Luton in 1962, the primary image of society was a relatively vague polarisation between 'us' and a distant, rich and unfathomable 'them'. Sociological research, despite finding evidence that there was variation within the working class (Martin and Fryer, 1973; Newby, 1978), concluded that a traditional proletarian image of society that distinguished 'us' and 'them' was the main widely shared form of class awareness among manual workers (Moorhouse, 1976; Roberts, 1977). Nevertheless, collective solidarity based upon the sense of belonging, togetherness and communal identity celebrated by the political Left, was in short supply (see the general discussion in Savage 2000).

11.2 Taking account of culture

These sociological accounts took little notice of cultural activities. The community ethnographies had noted some of the recreational activities of industrial and rural workers, but their accounts mostly revolved around work, family, neighbourhood and politics. It was the New Left of E.P. Thompson, Hoggart and Raymond Williams, and an emergent tradition of cultural studies drawing on their work, consolidated by Stuart Hall and the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS), that drew attention to the significance of the relations between culture and class. The new cultural studies suggested the existence of different bases for class formation and resistance, producing graphic studies of working-class youth subcultures, which used commercially-produced culture – music, scooters, recreational pastimes – to express a collective identity that was shaped partly by class position and partly in opposition to parental class cultures. CCCS found many forms of resistance – though also a good deal of accommodation – by the working class expressed through activity beyond the workplace and the home.¹

More important, perhaps, the later endeavour to re-work Gramsci's account of hegemony in post-structuralist terms undermined the expectation of a simple correspondence between classes and cultural practices. The theory of hegemony opened up the sphere of culture as one of negotiation between classes, with the ruling classes seeking to win the consent of the popular classes not by simply imposing their own culture but by connecting popular cultural values to their own. This resulted in a conception of the 'impurity' of different cultures, each containing a somewhat volatile mix of contradictory cultural elements with different class associations rather than being simply assignable to any single class (Hall, 1986a, 1986c). Later post-structuralist readings, influenced by Nicos Poulantzas (1974), severed all cultural practices from any essential class belongingness, seeing their class affiliations as entirely the contingent result of historical struggles for hegemony (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985).

Pierre Bourdieu was preparing *Distinction* during the 1960s and 1970s. Although, as we have seen, embracing a relational perspective, Bourdieu did not – and nor did he subsequently – entertain the prospect that the relations between class and culture might be so pliable. To the contrary, he saw strong connections between particular cultural practices and specific class positions yielding, in retrospect, a highly controversial account of the French working class. Bourdieu characterised working-class culture in terms of a taste for necessity and a principle of conformity. Of the culture of the necessary he said:

Necessity imposes a taste for necessity which implies a form of adaptation to and consequently acceptance of the necessary, a resignation to the inevitable, a deep-seated disposition which is in no way incompatible with a revolutionary intention, although it confers on it a modality which is not that of intellectual or artistic revolts. Social class is not defined solely by a position in the relations of production, but by the class habitus which is 'normally' (i.e. with a high statistical probability) associated with the position.

(Bourdieu, 1984: 372)

The culture of the necessary was premised on 'an inescapable deprivation of necessary goods' (Bourdieu, 1984: 372) and was characterised by the predominance of a functionalist ethic, 'obligatory choices' and resignation. Discussing the principle of conformity, he identified a form of conventionalism, especially among working-class women, founded upon practicality, which lies in opposition to the aesthetic orientations of the bourgeois woman. This was based in their lack of a sense of self-worth. The principle of conformity he illustrated as:

The calls to order ('Who does she think she is?' 'That's not for the likes of us'), which reaffirm the principle of conformity – the only explicit norm of popular taste – and aim to encourage the 'reasonable' choices that are in any case imposed by the objective conditions also contain a warning against the ambition to distinguish oneself by identifying with other groups, that is, they are a reminder of the need for class solidarity.

(Bourdieu, 1984: 380–381)

Bourdieu attributed these characteristics to the effects of domination. They do, he says, 'imply a form of recognition of the dominant values' (Bourdieu, 1984: 386). This is manifest in the use of 'cheap substitutes' for 'luxury goods' (Bourdieu, 1984: 386) and, particularly in relation to music and sport, the tendency to be 'reduced to the role of the "fan", the militant "supporter" locked in a passionate, even chauvinistic, but passive and spurious participation which is merely an illusory compensation for dispossession by experts' (Bourdieu, 1984: 386). An inferior cultural life is, he suggested, just another instance of the more general alienation associated with the working-class condition.

Bourdieu attributed this condition mostly to the role of schooling, especially primary schooling, and the misrecognition of its effects among those who have acquired few benefits or qualifications from their formal education. There they come to accept their own cultural dispossession by learning that educational success is a justification for privilege, and learning to accede to the authority of experts.

This is a pessimistic interpretation of working-class culture and the account has come in for extensive criticism. We have already criticised, in Chapter 2, the assumption of a particular and coherent class *habitus*. It appears condescending to the working class, denying them any degree of autonomy or much individuality. It overstates the subordination of working-class culture to legitimate culture.

It might be argued that, despite these general problems, Bourdieu may have been accurate in his characterisation of the French manual working class in the 1960s. Owing to the greater devastation of France's economy in the 1939–1945 War, France had not yet passed into a world of mass consumption and it is quite likely that the French working classes were much more constrained by a choice for the necessary than were their British counterparts. Also it is not obvious that the British working class, with their traditions of craft production and autonomy at work, ever acknowledged cultural authority to the same extent as the French (see McKibbin, 1998; Savage 2000). Yet, in spite of this, the sociological debates in the two countries have differed little, and concern the extent to which a distinctive working-class culture can still be defined.

11.3 The British working class today

We explained how we delineated the boundaries of the working class in Chapter 3. It comprises four occupational groups – lower supervisory, lower technical, semi-routine and routine workers. It contains 710 respondents, or 45 per cent of the sample. Thus, though no longer in a majority, this remains the largest social class by some margin. It is divided roughly equally by gender: 52 per cent are women, slightly less than the sample mean of 54 per cent. A high percentage have no educational qualifications (43 per cent), compared to 27 per cent of the sample as a whole. A total of 26 per cent have lower secondary, 13 per cent higher secondary and 10 per cent vocational qualifications; these are all close to the sample mean and the mean for the other classes.

However, only 7 per cent have degree-level qualifications compared with 23 per cent of the sample as a whole.

There is relatively little differentiation by age, though this is rather different from other classes. Twenty-two per cent of our working class respondents are over 65, much like the intermediate class (21 per cent), but greater than the proportion of professionals (13 per cent). This reflects the upward shift in the occupational structure in the last 30 years; there were fewer professional jobs available for the oldest cohorts. Also, 13 per cent of the working class are under 25, compared with 3 per cent of professionals and 5 per cent of the intermediate class, reflecting their earlier arrival in the labour market and slower progression into white collar jobs.

About 10 per cent of the working class is not of British origin, and just over 7 per cent identify as 'non-white'. This is a larger proportion than for other classes and more than twice the proportion for the intermediate class. Nevertheless it is not so large as to present a major cleavage within the working class.²

Overall, then, the class stands out most in terms of educational characteristics, particularly the high proportion with no qualifications and the low proportion of graduates, but it also contains a high proportion of young and minority ethnic group members compared with other classes. It should also be noted that the non-white minority ethnic group population in the sample is much younger than the rest: 84 per cent are under 55, compared with 66 per cent for the whole sample.

The working class is also disproportionately recruited from families that were themselves working class. Exactly two-thirds are second-generation working class. Otherwise a sixth of the working class has parents in each of the other two classes. By sociological standards, the working class is thus fairly homogeneous in origin and this might be expected to result in the transmission of cultural traits, such that the culture of the contemporary working class might be much like that of its parents and also distinct from the rest of the population. But is it? We next examine patterns of cultural consumption for their distinctiveness and assess the significance of divisions within the working class.

We initially identified class differences in cultural participation and taste in Chapter 3, where our cultural map (see Figure 3.1) shows that the first axis is associated with the distribution of social classes. The working class is positioned to the west of the Figure 3.1, where most of the participation variables are negative: never visiting museums, stately homes or art galleries; never going to the cinema; not playing sport; never attending the theatre or concerts; and not having read a book in the last year. Also, among tastes, dislikes for reading biographies and modern literature, and listening to classical music and jazz are found. Positive preferences are few: the poorly educated members of the working class are disproportionately likely to watch more than five hours television per day, to like soap operas and listening to country and western music, and to like eating out at fish-and-chip restaurants. The working class refuses some of the more legitimate cultural items, its distinctive preferences being for a narrow range of popular cultural forms. Doing less and having fewer positive preferences than other classes, means that it is also less omnivorous. The working class expresses more dislikes for the items we asked about than the other classes.

However, our cultural map includes only some of the items presented in the survey (see Appendix 2). For instance, the multiple correspondence analysis (MCA) did not contain any named cultural items. Other items in the schedule exhibited strong class differences. Among particular television programmes, books and pieces of music, we find further evidence of distinctive working-class tastes (see Table 11.1). On almost every indicator of taste, the working class is at an extreme, usually in the direction of liking items less than other classes. For example, all the pieces of classical music and jazz are less liked, as is the work

Table 11.1 Taste: liking of selected cultural items, by class

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Professional- executive class</i>	<i>Intermediate class</i>	<i>Working class</i>
Queen's Christmas broadcast	17	14	20	17
General election	24	34	25	20
Grand National	26	23	27	27
Football World Cup	44	43	44	46
Bergman	7	9	7	6
Hitchcock	34	30	34	37
Spielberg	44	39	41	48
Wonderwall	47	53	49	44
Oops	26	24	28	27
Stan	31	31	2	32
Chicago	65	71	72	60
Four Seasons	56	78	65	43
Symphony no. 5	19	31	23	13
Kind of blue	13	21	15	8
Warhol	22	32	24	16
Picasso	49	68	50	40
Emin	3	6	2	2
Van Gogh	67	83	75	58
Lowry	55	65	62	48
Turner	51	67	58	42
Kahlo	4	8	3	2
Favourite TV programmes				
<i>Sex and the City</i>	4	8	4	2
<i>Panorama</i>	5	7	6	3
<i>Touch of Frost</i>	14	14	16	13
<i>EastEnders</i>	12	9	11	13
<i>Friends</i>	7	6	7	7
<i>Coronation Street</i>	8	6	7	10
<i>Midsomer Murders</i>	9	8	9	11
Favourite type of TV programme				
Sport	13	11	15	13
News and current affairs	16	22	17	13
Nature/history documentaries	11	13	11	11
Drama	8	8	8	9
Soap operas	15	10	15	18
<i>n</i> = 1564		23.1%	28.7%	45.4%

of all the painters except Emin. The greatest contrast is almost always with the professional-executive class. In relation to specific named preferences, one measure of taste, the working class is distinct.

However, Table 11.1 also shows some items for which class distribution of preferences is negligible. For example, as we saw in Chapter 8, differentiation in preferences among television programmes and films is low. Genre choices do not open up wide and systematic gaps between the working class and the rest of the sample.

Only a quarter of the variables used to construct our MCA are located on axis 1, indicating by default that class differences are not universally evident. We need to recognise that some practices and tastes are shared, irrespective of class. Figure 3.9, which shows the ellipse for the working class on axes 1 and 2, indicates substantial overlap between the working class and the other two classes. There is shared common cultural ground across the classes, some manual workers having similar cultural portfolios to some professionals. Partitioning by class is not a matter of mutual *exclusivity*.

Hence, there is room for dispute over the interpretation of working-class preferences. The working class is not sharply separated, or excluded, from general patterns as represented by sample means, although, obviously, there are many significant differences when compared to the professional classes. Differentiation is sharpest in relation to traditional forms of legitimate culture in the artistic, literary, and music fields – and looks strongest in the first two of these. It is also highest in relation to those forms of culture whose legitimacy is associated with state funding – including the BBC television channels. Lack of participation in legitimate culture is fairly widespread among the working class. Other classes, especially the professional-executive class, have much wider exposure to public sites and performances of legitimate culture. Financial reasons, while relevant in some cases, do not seem to have much general bearing on these patterns; there is little sign of a strong and cohesive ‘culture of the necessary’.

Although the working class occupies a specific and separate location on the cultural map, it does not appear to have its own distinctive shared culture. It is by its apparent absences that it can most easily be identified. The impression is one of few shared tastes and practices except for some associated with commercial forms of popular culture, which are often shared by the members of other classes. However, while there thus does not appear to be a strong collective and cohesive working-class culture, we need to be cautious. We have already shown in Chapter 4 that those individuals located on the west side of the first axis are not socially marginal but usually have strong social lives based on kin, friends, and local relationships – but these are the kind of activities which we did not ask about in our survey. We need to be aware that our own analysis can inadvertently reproduce the very stereotypes that we want to challenge.

11.4 Detachment

The most striking feature of the first axis in Figure 3.1 is the abstention of the working class from participation in state and commercial forms of public culture.

Our survey contains further evidence that working-class people are not active in the public sphere (though that is not to say that they stay at home all the time – a different sense of privatisation – rather that they are removed from some of the main levers of popular political influence). Half of the working-class respondents are not members of any voluntary association, compared with 36 per cent of the intermediate class and 25 per cent of the professional-executive class. A trade union is the most frequently mentioned type of association to which working-class respondents are affiliated: 18 per cent of those of working age are members. Of other organisations, workers are likely to belong to social clubs, sports clubs and churches. As other studies have also shown (Li, Savage and Pickles, 2003; Warde, Tampubolon, Longhurst *et al*, 2003), the British working class is not inclined to join in the associational activities of civil society.

The working class still has a propensity to vote for the Labour Party, 29 per cent saying they would choose Labour if an election was called tomorrow, compared with 14 per cent for the Conservative Party and 12 per cent for the Liberal Democrats. However, 13 per cent say they would not vote (twice the proportion for the professional-executive class) and 21 per cent don't know, half as many again as for the professional-executive class. The working class is thus to some degree politically distinctive, as is also shown in responses to questions about political attitudes.

Answers to questions about political attitudes suggest that the working class has a sound sense of what might make its life easiest. They are mostly in favour of trade unions – 71 per cent think that unions are necessary to protect employees – but are not enamoured by Green arguments against economic growth (Table 11.2). All three classes tend to opt for things that are in their economic interest, or at least do relatively little harm to those interests. Mostly the working class shares the views of the intermediate classes towards punishment, immigration, censorship and homosexuality. Overall, the working class is much less liberal on civic issues than the professional-executive class and less conservative than the intermediate class on economic matters. In addition, the working classes trust other people significantly less than the other two classes, view their own health as comparatively poor and are a little less likely to claim to be in control of their own lives than either of the other two classes.

Let us next consider whether this picture is affected by our questionnaire design. Three issues need to be disentangled. The first concerns the levels and forms of engagement of the working classes in the institutions and practices of legitimate culture. The evidence is incontrovertible: the relations between the educational qualifications, the occupational preferment of the professional-executive class, and their participation in and liking for these cultural practices demonstrates their value as a distinctive class asset. There is equally little room for doubt that the working classes remain specifically excluded from this cultural-educational-occupational nexus.

The second issue concerns whether detachment from the practices and institutions of legitimate culture – and an associated detachment from formal politics – should be interpreted as evidence of a more general form of cultural

Table 11.2 Political opinions by class (percentage agree and agree strongly with various statements)

	<i>Professional- executive class</i>	<i>Intermediate class</i>	<i>Working class</i>	<i>All</i>
Strong trade unions are necessary to protect employees	63	56	71	65
Homosexual sexual relations are wrong	22	34	33	31
Needs censorship to uphold moral standards	73	76	76	75
Should protect environment over economic growth	62	52	51	54
Should be affordable child care to allow women to work	87	79	84	83
Immigration regulations are too loose and need tightening	71	88	87	83
Fair that those in HE should pay for tuition	33	36	40	37
Law breakers should have stiffer sentences	66	85	87	81
Do you mostly trust other people? Yes	44	36	28	34
For your age is your health good? Yes	81	77	67	73
'What happens to me is mostly my own doing'. Agree	87	83	79	82
<i>n</i> = 1564	23%	29%	45%	100%

disengagement. Caution is necessary. Few home-based and informal activities are included in the MCA. Photography, video games, board games, gardening, DIY, car maintenance, gambling, art and craft activities, radio and computer games are not included in our survey, all activities which tend to be home-based and relatively inexpensive. Also, while watching more than five hours television a day is a defining feature of working-class cultural life, no strongly distinctive preferences for particular genres are apparent because favourite programmes are widely shared with other classes. It is not, then, that the working classes are culturally inactive; rather, their cultural practices and interests are not distinct to them as a class.

Third, while the survey may not have covered all cultural activities, our qualitative evidence does not suggest that we have overlooked a rich cultural life specific to the working class. There are occasional references to enthusiasms and interests missed by the survey – Joe, for example, has a passion for steam trains that resonates with the technical forms of cultural capital he draws on in his work as an electrician and site foreman. However, while our evidence suggests that working-class people lead full lives, their plenitude is not the consequence of collective, class-specific cultural activities that have escaped our attention.

Joe and Edie are a good example of 'cultural normality' among the respectable working class. Asked how they see themselves, Edie replies:

How do we feel about ourselves? Nothing special probably. We're just working class, we're just your everyday, we haven't got loads of money, we haven't got, we don't, no airs and graces, just working class we are.

Although, as we saw in Chapter 4, their recreational pursuits are primarily home-centred, they clearly have strong contacts in the neighbourhood, especially with other family members, and engage enthusiastically in sociable activity. Their testimony reveals involvement in and liking for a wide range of activities, all of them, though, restricted to the home, neighbourhood, and popular media and commercial culture. Indifference for Joe, and irritation at state spending on the *beaux arts* by Edie, indicate their distanced relationship to legitimate culture. We have no reason to think their lives are less rich because of this absence and, even though it constitutes exclusion from a potentially valuable asset, it is certainly not a felt disadvantage or deprivation. Joe dismisses the Hockney as 'just scribble' and, while liking the Turner, is unperturbed at the prospect that he might never see it again. And Edie, explaining that she doesn't like arts programmes on television because they are too 'OTT' (over the top), elaborates the point with reference to an abstract painting on her wall, one a friend had painted for her, but which she clearly does not like:

that could go in an exhibition and be worth God knows how much but no, I call art or like painting as something that you can look at and know what it is, not that – I don't think it's for normal people.

Hostility to state provision in the arts appeared elsewhere in our working-class interviews and focus groups. It was almost as if the object of political critique had shifted from identifying a bourgeois class to state policy. For example, 52 per cent of working-class respondents agree that 'The arts funded by the government aren't really designed for ordinary people', while only 31 per cent of the professional-executive class do. Rejection of arts subsidies may also be part of a working-class tendency to assert some independence, and independent justification, for their own preferences, a tendency visible in a resistance to being told what to do, or what was good for them.

Rejection of cultural paternalism features in an exchange within the focus group of supervisors of manual workers:

Yvonne: Like Owen said, people want to go out and be entertained. They don't want to have to think and think it's good for you.

Ryan: You don't want to be told it's good for you.

A tension, between sensing an externally defined hierarchical cultural order and asserting, as does Carol (unskilled working-class focus group), that it is

‘just your opinion’, your ‘personal preference’, emerges in each working-class group, but ultimately it is agreed that the opinions of others can and should be ignored.

While personal preference is regularly invoked as a basis for choice, all the working class groups exhibit a strong collective attachment to their cultural pursuits. The skilled workers agree that, if one of them were to do something new, the rest would be very likely to join in. However, some activities are inconceivable, as is made explicit with respect to ballet among men in manual supervisory roles. There is always first a barrier of potential ridicule to be overcome. Humour emerges as a strong means of social control over cultural activity (for fear of appearing pretentious, it would seem) among the white working class. For example, asked whether it would matter if Kev took up ballroom dancing, Wayne, a 26-year-old window fitter, says ‘I wouldn’t mind. I’d take the piss out of him’. And in turn, Wayne, contemplating dressing like a pop star, avows ‘I might get the Mick taken’. Here is evidence of how conformity is policed.

As shown in the dialogue among the skilled workers, the working class conceive taste less as a function of complex aesthetic judgement and more as an orientation towards goods, fun and entertainment. Working-class participants are often uncomfortable with the categories of art and culture; for instance, one group’s discussion concluded with the observation ‘I disagree totally with art’. More attention focuses on moral than aesthetic bad taste (cf. Woodward and Emmison, 2001). Moral bad taste can be identified easily and people can and should be held to account. Cultural bad taste is very hard to define but, where identified, was definitely not a reason for despising people. This seems to be common to working-class groups, but less so for the younger middle class.

The working class, then, appears to have an alternative understanding of cultural judgement, seeing it as they practice it, as a group matter. They exhibit forms of group solidarity; and they are more aware of groups aligned in opposition to one another. It is collective rather than individualised disagreement and learning new tastes is a matter of social network connections (and of exclusion too). They are not in awe of legitimate culture and find no value in refinement. Their solidaristic group ethic does not, however, translate into a form of political solidarity.

11.5 Local games of distinction: divisions within the working class

If the working class share only limitedly in a distinctive way of life, we might ask whether that is the result of strong internal divisions. Our evidence indicates variation within the class. The question is whether this is systematic and can be attributed to internal class fractions. Different preparation, circumstances or rewards arising from the employment relation might be a basis of internal differentiation, as might different ways of performing class among such fractions. At the same time, however, it is difficult to disentangle these questions from changes in the gendered and ethnic composition of such class fractions. We shall therefore, in exploring differences within the working classes, be concerned to

identify how these are informed by gender and ethnicity as a prelude to our more detailed consideration of these questions in the next two chapters.

Historical studies of the working class have shown how early divisions between skilled and unskilled workers were steadily eroded during the twentieth century (Savage and Miles, 1994; McKibbin, 1998). We also find little evidence for strong differentiation along these lines, finding, rather, a more complex set of divisions. In our sample, lower technicians, the NS-SEC category equivalent to skilled manual workers, comprise a relatively small segment of the working class, accounting for only 4 per cent of the total sample. They are overwhelmingly male (92 per cent) and comprise the section of the working class with the highest percentage of white British respondents. Their age profile is much the same as for the working class as a whole, though fewer younger workers are included. The lower technicians are relatively affluent but also relatively poorly educated: they comprise the class sector with the lowest percentage of university-educated (2 per cent) and, after routine workers, the highest percentage of those with no educational qualifications. However, their educational profile is most distinguished by the relatively high levels of those with higher secondary or vocational qualifications; this was also true of their fathers.

Lower technicians identify themselves strongly in class terms and, within the working class, are the most likely to define themselves as working class and the least likely to identify as middle class. They are also the most likely to vote Labour and are relatively illiberal in their social attitudes, showing low levels of tolerance for homosexuality and the most negative attitudes toward immigration within the working class.

The most affluent, the most male, the whitest and the most British section of the working class, with the strongest sense of class identity and working-class political affiliation, the lower technicians are the remnants of the traditional, skilled, male working class that had provided the labour movement with much of its core support and a good deal of its industrial leadership. Their resources consist in a stock of 'technical capital' comprising both vocational qualifications and technical forms of 'know-how' acquired through a mixture of schooling and the acquisition of technical skills once transmitted as a form of capital from father to son (Bourdieu, 2005: 78–81). The importance of technical capital to the lower technicians is evident from their magazine reading: they are the most likely of all sections of the working classes – and, indeed, of all classes – to read magazines related to their work as well as craft and hobby magazines, and mechanical, technical and computing magazines.

Table 11.3 summarises the degree to which different sections of the working class take part in the activities identified in axes 1 and 2 of our MCA. It shows whether lower technicians, lower supervisory and semi-routine workers take part more than, less than or about the same as routine workers. Lower technicians have the highest rates of participation for the items in bold. The italicised items indicate that the participation rates for lower supervisory workers, who are mostly men (69 per cent), and semi-routine workers, who are mostly women (72 per cent), are higher than those for lower technicians and routine workers. The remaining items

Table 11.3 Participation in selected activities, fractions of the working class

	<i>Lower supervisory</i>	<i>Semi-routine</i>	<i>Lower technician</i>
Rock concerts	*	*	**
Night clubs	(-)	=	*
Pubs	=	=	**
Eat out	=	*	*
Weekday TV (less than 1 hour)	*	*	**
<i>Museums</i>	*	*	(-)
<i>Orchestral concerts</i>	*	*	=
<i>Stately homes</i>	*	*	=
<i>The theatre</i>	*	*	(-)
<i>Art galleries</i>	*	*	(-)
<i>Racquet sports</i>	*	=	*
<i>Books read, none</i>	(-)	(-)	*
<i>Musicals (theatre)</i>	*	*	(-)
<i>Cinema</i>	*	*	*
<i>Paintings owned (none)</i>	*	*	*
<i>Weekday TV (5 hours +)</i>	(-)	(-)	(-)
<i>Books read (26 +)</i>	=	*	(-)

* More than routine workers; = more or less the same as routine workers; (-) less than routine workers;

** markedly higher for lower technicians than for lower supervisors and semi-routine workers.

are ones for which participation rates are more-or-less the same for these three sections of the working class.

The patterns that are evident here suggest that lower-supervisory and semi-routine workers are more likely to have cultural horizons that reach outside the working class. Like the lower managers in the intermediate classes, they are more engaged in cultural practices with a high legitimacy value and a strong association with the professional-executive class: visiting museums, stately homes and art galleries, going to the theatre and orchestral concerts, reading books and playing racquet sports. Lower technicians do more of things that involve expenditure (going to night clubs, eating out, going to the pub) but which lack legitimacy; their preferred activities are located more toward the centre of the space of lifestyles. Thus if lower supervisory and semi-routine workers seek out institutionally validated forms of cultural capital that lead away from the working class, this is not true of lower technicians.

Similar patterns are evident regarding taste. The distinctive gender composition of the lower technicians is reflected in their aversion to soap operas and musicals, and their fondness for sports television and westerns. Again, though, the tastes of the lower supervisors and semi-routine workers tend to cleave away from those of routine workers and towards those of the professional-executive class in relation to the most canonical genres of the different fields: classical music, Impressionism, French restaurants, modern literature, and costume drama or literary adaptation films – plus the more centre-field genre of science fiction films. Lower technicians

are most distinct in their musical tastes. Their fondness for heavy metal, and for country and western music reflects their educational profile, with regression analysis showing that a liking for these genres is strongest among those with lower secondary and vocational educational qualifications, respectively (Savage, 2005). Their liking for rock music and modern jazz similarly locates them toward the middle of the field. Insofar as the tastes of lower technicians reach outside the working class, they do so along a trajectory in which relations between technical capital and economic capital have a greater salience than more traditional forms of cultural capital.

The ethnic boost sample is not large enough to permit confident assessments of the significance of class divisions within it. An additional difficulty is that the class compositions of the three minority ethnic groups are markedly different. Taken as a whole, however, class is a less salient aspect of identification for the working-class members of this sample: 27 per cent think of themselves as belonging to a particular class compared to 31 per cent of the main sample, with 59 per cent identifying themselves as working class compared to 64 per cent of the main sample. We observed earlier low levels of interest in a number of practices that have strong connections with the white working classes: strong dislike of programmes like *Coronation Street*, for example, and a more distanced relationship to pubs. More detail is revealed by the focus group recruited from Pakistani members of the working class since, of the three groups we surveyed, the Pakistanis cluster most strongly in the routine and semi-routine occupational groups – with also a very large percentage of unemployed – while numbering scarcely any lower supervisors or technicians.

The discussion indicates some strong differences in the organisation of everyday life with major implications for cultural consumption. First, work is central, making cultural activity and entertainment suspect. This is partly a generational difference, with participants (who are relatively young) leaving the impression that their parents work, read and attend to family matters, but that otherwise their activity is restricted. Younger members use television and audio-visual media, in which parents are less involved. Parents, it is reported, had worked very hard and are intolerant of idleness – and their sons do not want to be seen to break with the habit. But a growth in taking holidays in Britain and in Europe over the last few years is reported, and there is considerable ambivalence about the qualities of music and drama. At the same time, several talk about lack of money for commercial entertainment, which is considered expensive, and therefore want more (and appreciate more) of what the local council and businesses put on by way of events, fairs and so on. A lack of sports and other provision for women only – swimming baths and gyms – is noted, and in general religious considerations are significant in a manner not apparent in other focus groups. There is a local Pakistani circle of activities – of poetry, drama, some music and sports activity. Some play for Pakistani football and cricket teams. Also specialist television and radio channels are used. The impression is of a cohesive, but not very varied, set of specialised cultural genres; film dramas, some folk music. Members claim not to watch a lot of television and are hesitant about watching television after 9 pm

because of salacious programmes. This hesitancy stretches to public arts events – there is very little theatre-going and not much art appreciation. Film is popular, with a mixture of Hindi, westerns and Bollywood. The same is true of music, with most having some taste for Indian music. Probably the community focus of local ethnic *sociability* ('Asian people coming together') results in a wider range of knowledge and appreciation of different cultural activities than is the case in the white British working-class groups. Certainly the portrayal of everyday culture is very different. Most striking is the extent of domestic hospitality: 'Each and every weekend we invite people'; attendance at fairs and festivals (with traditional sports and competitions) is regular; and mention of big weddings is evidence of extensive community life. The overall impression is of situated cultural taste, though drawing from the Indian subcontinent, which is a significantly localised form that places culture in a social context, with the social rather than the aesthetic elements being of primary importance.

11.6 Class hostility?

What are the consequences of working-class cultural practices for class relations? When asked to define good taste, the group of young skilled manual workers discuss money and possessions. Consider the following exchange where Jess, continuing a discussion of eating out, tries to identify good taste:

Jess: Fine wines and just having the money [pause], I think good taste is just having the money to go to a really posh restaurant where they get their food in fresh. Rather than, when you go to a pub it's all frozen.

Kate: And antiques ...

Kev: It all boils [down] to money.

Kate: It does, yes.

Kev: If I was a millionaire now, or say if like, a millionaire walked in here now and looked at us lot, he'd say, 'Oh God!'

Wayne: There's a lot too much judging going on in the world, like.

Kev: Yes.

Wayne: Yeah, there is too much judging. Like people, you [referring to the moderator] are saying 'what kind of people would go to the theatre?' and we would, like not through any fault of anybody's, but if we went to the theatre and watched them walking out we'd be judging them as geeks.

Kev: And they'd be judging us.

Wayne: Yeah, like, 'Look at the piss-heads'.

Kate: Yes, they'd be judging.

Moderator: What's your definition of a geek, just roughly?

Wayne: Just somebody who doesn't know how to have any fun.

Steve: Doesn't seem to have fun like. Just does boring things.

Kev: Doesn't like a laugh.

Daz: Just someone who's opposite to us.

Wayne: Probably somebody who's quite happy in themselves but we'd call them a geek and they'd call us piss-heads or a bum or something.

Moderator: Yes. And would that put you off going to these sorts of places?

Wayne: No. I don't really care about the opinions of anybody. Everybody has got their own opinion.

This discussion reveals a strong sense of social differences, implicitly redolent of class hostility. Taste is a means of identifying social groups, and is clearly associated with a sense of social hierarchy, of superiority and inferiority. We see a clear awareness of the politics of classification, in which "there is a lot too much judging going on", and awareness that it is they who are being judged.

A similar message comes from the group of unskilled manual workers. Gaz asks a rhetorical question, 'Who tells us what is a good picture and what isn't? Who decides what gets hung up somewhere?' and concludes that it was 'Those who've got the say'. Continuing, he quips, 'I don't know who they are, do I? I'll tell you they're nor from around here, though'. Gaz's resentment here at the capacity to judge and classify exercised by powerful people in metropolitan locations is palpable.

In these accounts we see a sense of 'them' and 'us', and a strong hint of hostility lurking in an awareness that people from another class might make negative judgements, but there is no intimation of deference. Wayne does not accord credit to 'geeks' and certainly would not have wanted to become one. Nor would Gaz or any of his associates.

The evidence of our survey suggests only limited awareness of class. Only 33 per cent of the sample and, only 31 per cent of working-class respondents, said 'yes' when asked 'Do you think of yourself as belonging to any particular social class?'. In 1984, Marshall and his colleagues found that over 60 per cent identified in these terms, so there may have been a decline in class identity.³

It has been argued that, as class divisions intensify structurally, so the awareness of class becomes muted, leading to a paradox of class (Savage, 2000). Skeggs (1997) argued that unwillingness to talk in class terms may not necessarily mean that people do not recognise the significance of class or of their own class position. If thinking of class induces shame, embarrassment, anxiety, etc., as it did among the young working-class women that she interviewed, it might prevent its articulation without diminishing their experience of its effects. Skeggs suggests that they have a particular way of seeing themselves and others that involved trying *not* to be working class. They pursued strategies for 'improvement' but despite many attempts at 'passing' as middle class, they always remained anxious and insecure, apologising for their taste, never certain that they had succeeded, whether in terms of body management, dress or interior design. Hence, Skeggs surmises that:

Class was central to the young women's subjectivities. It was not spoken of in the traditional sense of recognition – I am working class – but rather, was

displayed in their multifarious efforts not to be recognised as working class. They disidentified and they dissimulated.

(Skeggs, 1997: 74)

Our evidence indicates reluctance to use class explicitly as a unit of social classification. The term class is used in less than a quarter of the focus groups, and mostly by the university-educated middle class. Associated terms like 'snob' and 'posh' arise in an additional 25 per cent of groups. The language of class is in retreat in the cultural context, as it is in British political and social discourse more generally. Nevertheless, ideas of class and social division have 'gone underground' in that many focus group members recognise that social pressures operate in powerful ways. Socialisation, both primary and secondary, social mobility, media output and fashion are among the forces mentioned. Half the population think that snobbery (probably the most heinous crime after being morally 'offensive' in the discussions that we recorded) still exists. Much anxiety is expressed about being seen to be pretentious or snobbish among working- and middle-class groups. Also, working-class people are still made to feel uncomfortable sometimes because of their exclusion from a full range of cultural activities.

That the working class do not engage greatly with legitimate culture need not mean that they dislike or disparage it; they could be simply indifferent. However, working-class people do see cultural activities as having some implications for gradations of social status and there is an undertone of resentment of the distinction effect among the working class. There is concealed hostility towards the refined or the 'posh'. One indicator is their expressions of distaste. Of 40 items about which we hold information about both likes and dislikes, a number are significantly more disliked by the working class than by the professional class: rock music, modern literature, heavy metal, watching the General Election coverage on TV, classical music, modern jazz and biographies. The first three are the most legitimate, while the others are all liked more by graduates than by those with no qualifications. This, if not evidence of working-class hostility to key items of legitimate culture certainly indicates detachment. While unable to prove conclusively that dislikes represent social prejudices rather than simply aesthetic disagreements, examination of the differential dislikes of the professional-executive class and working classes suggests that distaste for particular items does mark social boundaries.

The qualitative evidence suggests a suspicion among some that the working class is divided between the respectable and the non-respectable. One section of the class is regularly referred to in the media as 'Chavs', a disparaged group who would in earlier decades have been described as the 'rough' working class. In Wales they are called 'mushes'. Apropos aesthetic bad taste, the skilled working-class focus group nominates 'mushes', who are described as wearing 'shell suits', 'dodgy trainers', '15-year-olds with kids', 'big gold chains round their necks', 'massive earrings', 'lots of gold' and 'bleached blond hair'. So while it is largely impermissible, especially among the middle class, to impugn the tastes of other individuals or groups, one part of the working class is content to describe another section of the working class as feckless and without taste.

Now, interestingly, they are identified as much by their choices of commodity in the marketplace as for their moral failings.

11.7 Conclusion

The working class, when its boundaries are drawn with reference to cultural participation and taste, is distinctive in aggregate. Its principal defining features are its lack of participation and its dislike of legitimate culture. Non-participation is especially typical of both the elderly and the young, while dislike of legitimate culture is more pronounced among younger than older working-class members.

Although forced to conclude that there is no distinctive, separate and autonomous working-class culture, echoes and residues of the past emerge in the independent technical and practical culture of the skilled working class. Perhaps most marked among the skilled male manual workers, the class as a whole has a tendency to vote Labour, or to abstain; to feel positively towards trade unions; to be concerned with its material interests, judging state policies on the arts, immigration and economic management from the point of view of improving its own conditions. There is a tendency to see social structure in terms of ‘us’ and them’, although little of that sensibility is translated into active use of the language of class. There is a weak sense of class identity; less than a third think of themselves as belonging to a class, though when asked to say to which class they belong, almost two-thirds nominate the working class.

While most members of the working class are detached from legitimate culture, they are nevertheless positioned by it. Detachment is a better notion than exclusion; they don’t feel excluded. This has hallmarks of Runciman’s (1966) arguments in the 1960s that the working class had ‘restricted reference groups’ and did not compare themselves with the advantaged middle classes. Just as in the 1960s, there is no indication of deference towards legitimate culture. There is a faint awareness that legitimate culture is attributed a special value and commands advantages. They probably came into contact with that through the process of education, which, more often than not, had failed to provide convertible cultural capital for them. But their priorities lie elsewhere and their attention to aesthetic dimensions of taste is limited. Lives are organised around different priorities, conviviality, family, work, perhaps material objects, but not cultural refinement – as indeed the evidence in Chapter 4 confirms.

The evidence does not suggest that there is a substantial clash of cultures between classes. This is partly an effect of the middle class usurping distinctive elements of working-class culture, a corollary of the spread of varied kinds of omnivorousness. It is partly a consequence of the dismantling of manual working-class communities in the wake of de-industrialisation. And it is partly the consequence of the defusing of a distinctively working-class politics, which fostered alternative and oppositional values that overflowed into the cultural realm.

Perhaps, in addition, we might say that the working class now has full access to, and has made widespread use of, a commercial mass culture. It shares with

the majority within the other classes a wide range of tastes in television, film, commercial recreation and sport. A large degree of overlap among the three classes is revealed by axis 1 of the MCA. The absence of any positive distinctiveness, however, indicates the lack of any forms of profit or advantage that the working class can derive from its cultural portfolio. A narrower range of activity, the absence of specialised areas from which specific profits can be realised, with perhaps the exception of technical capital among the lower technicians, and a lesser commitment to culture mean that, when compared with the professional class, neither economic nor social gain on the wider social stage is to be had from their cultural practice.

We can hence see only weak forms of proletarianism, most pronounced among (technical) skilled male manual workers, with nothing much of substance taking its place. The working class remains disadvantaged by economic rewards and certainly lacks command of legitimate cultural capital. It is also disadvantaged by limited participation in voluntary associations. Society does not belong to the working class. Its members are excluded from the formulation of public life – that is, they have progressively withdrawn from politics. They have less economic and social capital; and what cultural capital they have is not exchangeable for more cultural capital. Nevertheless, working-class respondents do not feel sorry for themselves, and they operate still distinctive autonomous cultures of conviviality and neighbourliness. They are not in thrall to legitimate culture. Their primary woes, injustices and indignities probably emanate from other sources, but detachment is an element of their being under-privileged.

12 Gender and cultural capital

12.1 Introduction

Although Bourdieu clearly framed his thinking in terms of class, his social theory is also relevant to contemporary problematics of gender. It is indeed the issue of class that has made his work most appealing to feminist analyses. The significance of class has been demonstrated in the experiences of both sexual desire (Walkerdine and Lucey, 1989), and the performance of femininity and respectability among working-class women (Skeggs, 1997). Class-based judgements also inform experiences of motherhood (Reay, 1998; Lawler, 2000) and are deeply implicated in the educational strategies of parents, particularly mothers (Reay, 2004). Bourdieu (2001) himself ventured into a theoretical engagement with gender in his study of the power of masculinity. There he restated observations from his early Kabyle studies, emphasizing the *naturalisation* of a division of labour, which positions women as ‘objects’ of symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 2001a: 99–100). This point was also rehearsed to argue that a structured sexual division of labour generates sexually differentiated perspectives on the world (Bourdieu, 1977, 1990b). But like other eminent male scholars, Bourdieu ignored much feminist work (see the discussion in Adkins, 2004; Skeggs, 2004; Silva, 2005; and Lovell 2000). *Distinction*’s ‘blind spot’ with respect to the analysis of gender is notorious. In a 600-page book, gender appeared on numerous occasions (with ‘women’ being explicitly mentioned on only 27 pages!), and yet it was never subject to systematic analysis, even though the gendering of taste was a major concern of the book. Why is this so?

Gender is hidden in normalcy. Bourdieu’s ‘sexually’ organised social order is stable because it is centred in nature, making sexed bodies constant in culture. Founded on sexual differences, the gendered habitus is premised on a sexed body, which in turn underpins social identity. Bourdieu thinks of this sex identity, founded on the body, ‘as given, basic and common across time and cultures’ (Silva, 2005a: 92). He accordingly fails to see how the normalcy of sexed bodies works differently from gender as a form of capital. Embodiment relates to the composition and volume of capital, which is acquired and stored (in bodies) in different ways regarding gender and class (Chapter 9). If bodies operate as a form

of capital, as embodied cultural capital, why does not gender constitute a form of capital in Bourdieu's thinking?

Lesley McCall (1992) compares Bourdieu's analysis of gender to his analysis of ethnicity, noting a significant contradiction. Ethnicity is identified as a 'secondary principle' that reinforces the structure of economic and cultural capital because ethnically identified members of a group are distributed into social classes according to their location in the hierarchy of the ethnic group. Ethnicity functions as a secondary vertical layer of social stratification. Gender, by contrast, is conceived as operating *within* the processes of social stratification, and is thus hidden so far as its independent stratifying effects are concerned. According to Bourdieu, embodied gendered capital is symbolic 'because it appears to be universal and natural' (McCall, 1992: 844). A 'misrecognition of gender' thus occurs (Skeggs, 2004), by which the social processes and structures necessary to the existence of gendered dispositions, which create inequalities, are successfully legitimized. Often gender operates as such when amalgamated with other dispositions of power and privilege.

This chapter addresses whether gender is an additional axis of inequality that cross-cuts cultural, economic and social capital, or whether these capitals themselves need to be thought of as 'gendered', so we can appreciate better the different kinds of femininities and masculinities associated with them. We address this by taking stock of Bourdieu's conception of the family, which he analyses within a normative framework that erases the significance of difference and inequality within families and in non-traditional gendered practices (Silva, 2005a). This is an issue that bears on his deployment of field analysis, which implicitly constructs public worlds of socio-spatial differentiation, dismissing private and personal relationships as of little or no consequence.

We begin from the earlier analysis of the third axis of our cultural map laid out in Chapter 3. We argued that the opposition between inward and outward orientations is not simply a surrogate for gender. Although it maps in some distinct ways the preferences of women and men, this is routed through their different relations to the inward and outward dispositions associated with particular cultural items. Likewise, the third axis is not a template for emotional capital, since, for example, particular issues related to bodily and technical assets are mapped on to the space in a dispersed manner. Our aim in probing this axis further is to examine the inter-relationships between different types of cultural capital and gender divisions without reducing the complexity of cultural taste to essentialisms.

In addressing this central concern, we also tackle three specific issues. First, are capitals to be construed as household or individual resources? Bourdieu's survey in *Distinction* distinguishes men and women (though not within the same household), but he does not distinguish them according to the kinds of households in which they dwell. This reflects his tendency, further developed in *Masculine Domination*, to assume male-dominated households to be universal, and almost timeless, phenomena, which can therefore be disregarded when assessing the specific play of capitals in any particular time and place. However, households today are highly fluid and diverse, with very different forms of organisation, and significant

numbers of them no longer conform to a traditional male-dominated model. Thus, we explore the reproduction processes through which some household types, depending upon their particular insertion in the social, are more effective than others in passing on their resources to their children.

The second issue concerns how gender relates to the deployment and transmission of forms of capital. Historically, forms of capital have been gender specific. The possession of economic capital, in the form of property and financial resources, was historically largely a male prerogative, and although legal reform has made some attempt to individualise property ownership, forms of male privilege continue, for instance, in assessing the pension rights of co-resident couples and in determining appropriate financial settlements when partners separate. An extensive literature exists on gender-specific forms of social capital, and in particular the power of male homosociality to exclude and marginalise women in public and institutional settings (Kanter, 1977; Halford, Savage and Witz, 1997; Wajcman, 1998). While strong female social networks, often organised around informal relationships, can be found, they act predominantly as countervailing forces. More specifically, this female social capital rarely crosses different fields and so does not permit the conversion of capitals as easily as do male networks. Finally, and by contrast, women's central roles as child-carers and educators have accorded them significant leverage in transmitting cultural advantages. Rosemary Crompton and Kay Sanderson (1990) emphasised how the central feature of women's improved position in the labour market since the 1960s came from their pulling the 'qualifications lever', allowing them to use their educational qualifications to move into professional and other forms of expert employment (see, more generally, Savage and Egerton, 1996). The expansion of women's employment in middle-class sectors poses important issues about how far women in advantaged jobs are able to command equivalent powers to comparable men. Building on the work of Adkins and Lury (1999) and Connell (1989), which shows that men can appropriate femininity for career advancement, Skeggs (2005) argued that gender is only able to be a form of cultural capital once it is symbolically legitimated. In short, the complex and variable relationships between gender and forms of capital needs to be recognised.

Third, we examine the relationship between cultural practices and gender identities. Gender and sexual identities now proliferate in ways inconsistent with assumed notions of their being 'natural' or 'normal'. Some feminists, such as Lois McNay (2000), argue that critical feminist identities can arise from the mismatch between women's position in fields of employment and family, and there is particular interest in whether professional women are especially prone to be more critical of gender norms. We consider, therefore, what kinds of gender and sexual identity are presented by our interviewees, and assess whether these can be seen as the product of 'mismatches' between fields.

Focusing on these three issues, we begin by considering the organisation of households, showing how the fragmentation of family forms in some respects intensifies class divisions, while in others it leads to the erosion of social boundaries. In particular, it limits the cohesiveness of the intermediate class. In the following section, we explore how gender is arrayed on the third axis

of our cultural map to assess how it relates to cultural capital. We then turn to our interview material to show how gender and sexual identities are related to interviewees' location on the space of lifestyles. We emphasise that women exhibit greater variety in their gendered identity than men. Women can question traditional feminine identities in several ways, especially professional women. In general, although household and gender relations are diverse and changing, cultural advantage accrues to those in more conventional households.

12.2 Gender and household relations

Bourdieu's *Distinction* is premised on the dominance of the male breadwinner, in which the male earner defined the position of the entire household. Like numerous other sociologists of the time (notably, Goldthorpe, 1983), he conflated household situation with the occupational position of men. While recognising unequal relations between men and women, he analysed cultural capital as fundamentally a household resource, thus hiding inequalities of assets and investments within the family unit.

Since the 1960s, this assumption has been problematised by the increasing numbers of women in the labour market, especially those with dependent children. Increasing numbers of women in professional and managerial jobs challenge the convention that the male earner is paramount in defining the social position of the household. The growth of 'cross-class families' means that some women are in more privileged occupational positions than their male partners (MacRae, 1990). The rise of 'non-conventional' households is also important, especially with increasing numbers of single-person households, or multi-adult households not defined by a male-female couple (Silva and Smart, 1999).

Patterns of engagement in culture are related to household type as well as class. Tables 12.1 and 12.2 show how each social class is broken down by gender of respondent and by household type. Here we measure class in terms of the last occupation reported by those who are not currently in the labour market, to give us a proxy for their occupational experiences.

If we look first at the bottom row of these tables, we see that men and women are distributed relatively equally across the three classes. This should not surprise us, since if there were marked gender disparities in the class composition, then we would expect to find gender itself arrayed on the first axis of our cultural map. However, this does not mean there is gender equality in the labour market. Men consistently earn more than women in aggregate terms. Also, there are significant forms of segregation within classes, for instance, among the professionals, where women are over-represented in the 'lower professionals' group.

If we look down the final column, we can see how diverse family forms are, and also how in this respect there are interesting differences between men and women. A higher proportion of women, 24 per cent compared to 20 per cent of men, live in single-person households of both 'working' and 'retired', or as lone parents with dependent children. Being a lone mother accounts for most of this difference. For men, we see the conventional household forms with co-resident couples and dependent children over-represented amongst the professional-executive class,

Table 12.1 Male respondents' social class, by household type (row per cent)

<i>Type of household</i>	<i>Social class – males</i>			<i>Total</i>	
	<i>Professional-executive class</i>	<i>Intermediate class</i>	<i>Working class</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Single</i>					
Working	22	24	52	98	14
Retired	15	24	62	34	5
<i>Unrelated adults</i>	20	14	66	99	14
<i>Couples</i>					
With no children	25	33	41	237	34
With dependent children	33	32	35	151	22
With non-dependent children	10	24	66	41	6
<i>Lone parents</i>					
With dependent children	20	20	60	5	1
With non-dependent children	21	29	50	14	2
<i>Multi-family</i>	24	19	57	21	3
<i>Total</i>	24	28	48	700	100

Table 12.2 Female respondents' social class, by household type (row per cent)

<i>Type of household</i>	<i>Social class – females</i>			<i>Total</i>	
	<i>Professional-executive class</i>	<i>Intermediate class</i>	<i>Working class</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Single</i>					
Working	28	30	42	60	7
Retired	15	27	58	81	10
<i>Unrelated adults</i>	15	27	58	86	11
<i>Couples</i>					
With no children	29	34	36	231	28
With dependent children	29	29	42	192	24
With non-dependent children	12	39	49	59	8
<i>Lone parents</i>					
With dependent children	17	32	52	54	7
With non dependent children	19	22	59	32	4
<i>Multi-family</i>	17	33	50	180	2
<i>Total</i>	23	31	46	816	100

and under-represented amongst other classes. Whereas 24 per cent of men belong to the professional-executive class, 33 per cent of men who live with partners and have dependent children belong to this class. Twenty-two per cent of the men in this class who still work live alone. The situation is different for women: 23 per cent of women belong to the professional-executive class, 28 per cent of whom are still working and live in single-person households. Twenty-nine per cent of women living with a partner and with dependent children are from the professional-executive class.

Table 12.3 Occupational class of male respondent and occupational class of partner row percent

<i>Male respondent's occupational class</i>	<i>Occupational class of partner</i>			<i>Total numbers = 100%</i>
	<i>Professional-executive class</i>	<i>Intermediate class</i>	<i>Working class</i>	
Professional-executive	48	35	16	122
Intermediate	26	46	28	134
Working class	11	32	57	191
Total	26	37	37	447

Table 12.4 Occupational class of female respondent and occupational class of partner row percent

<i>Female respondent's occupational class</i>	<i>Occupational class of partner</i>			<i>Total numbers = 100%</i>
	<i>Professional-executive class</i>	<i>Intermediate class</i>	<i>Working class</i>	
Professional-executive	57	10	34	134
Intermediate	33	18	50	169
Working class	20	14	66	212
Total	34	14	52	515

Tables 12.1 and 12.2 do not consider how far those men and women who live in partnered households are likely to be in the same occupational class groups as their partners. Tables 12.3 and 12.4 therefore cross-tabulate the positions of male and female partners so that we can assess how many cross-class families there are and whether there tend to be socially exclusive partnerships. In general terms, we can note that it is rare for members of different classes, and especially of the professional-executive class and working classes, to live together.

Table 12.3 shows that men from the professional-executive class are over four times more likely to live with a female partner from that class than are working-class men (48 per cent compared with 11 per cent). Women from the professional-executive class are three times more likely to live with a man from that class than with a working-class man (57 per cent compared to 20 per cent). In general, this social selectivity is more in evidence for men than for women: 34 per cent of partnered women from the professional-executive class live with working-class men, and 20 per cent of working-class women live with men from the professional-executive class. There is evidence here, therefore, that women from the professional-executive class are more likely to be in less conventional household relations, whether this be in single households, or living with a man from the opposite end of the class hierarchy. This might be related to forms of gender reflexivity among women, as hypothesised by McNay (2000), and is an issue we take up in Section 12.4. Men from the professional-executive class, however, are

more likely to be in more conventional family forms, and are particularly unlikely to partner working-class women.

A similar pattern pertains for the working class. Only 11 per cent of working-class men live with a female partner who is in the professional-executive class, five times fewer than those who live with working-class partners (57 per cent). By contrast, 20 per cent of working-class women live with men from the professional-executive class, three times fewer than the 66 per cent of women from the working class who live with working-class men.

Because partnerships are formed on the basis of social similarity, a high degree of class endogamy within household relationships exists. 'Cross-class households' (see MacRae, 1990) are comparatively rare for the working and professional-executive classes. The situation is different for the intermediate class. Women in the intermediate class show relatively greater mobility but a larger propensity to partner with members of the working-class. Only 40 per cent of intermediate-class members in partnered households live with other intermediate-class partners, whereas 58 per cent of working-class respondents live with working-class partners, and 47 per cent of professional-executive class live with partners from the same class. Their relatively indistinct cultural profile might be explained in terms of partnered intermediate-class members being more likely to live with a professional or a working-class partner than with another member of the intermediate class.

It seems that men tend to preserve their dominant position and generate further resources for themselves through their partnerships, whereas women are relatively more likely to lose out on the potential to accumulate cultural capital through their choice of partners. However, we do not assert a theory of masculine domination in the terms proposed by Bourdieu (2001). Rather than attributing inequalities to women's economic subordination to men, we stress the salience of differing relational resources associated with the different gendered positions of women and men in relation to their respective levels of cultural capital.

12.3 Cultural fields and the gendering of individuals

In general, the explicit gendering of cultural practices is more commonly found amongst our focus groups with older people and declines in significance as younger men and women increasingly engage with similar activities. Female rural service workers talk about the appeal of the Women's Guild, whilst the retired middle class talk about women's greater propensity to join voluntary groups. Jos, among the latter, talks about dramatic changes to women's role in her lifetime, while all agree that gender divisions are currently less marked. Similarly, men from the supervisors' group in Wales talk about their declining enthusiasm for male voice choirs – 'the husbands would rather go and have a Sunday night down the pub than go and sit there', is how Dewi puts it. In some of the focus groups, such as amongst the gay men, there is a clear concern to avoid 'sexist' formulations when discussing good taste and socially acceptable behaviour, whilst the supervisors note more wistfully that it is now unacceptable to tell racist or sexist jokes.

Sport is the main area where gender divisions are identified as being of continued importance. Those in the benefit claimants' focus group talk about the growing

importance of women's sport. Women from the retired working-class focus group talk about being 'football' or 'races' widows, deprived of the company of their husbands owing to their sporting enthusiasm, but compensated by their own enthusiasm for women's magazines. Even here, as in several other groups, they talk about the importance of women taking part in sport in 'appropriate' ways. Some members of the Pakistani working-class group, and also of the professionals' focus groups, discuss gender-specific swimming sessions, while the Indian middle classes speak about women-orientated gyms. For some working-class groups, gender raises issues of acceptable behaviour, as amongst the skilled manual workers, where several men note the unacceptability of watching ballet: 'ballet and men just don't get on, do they?', says BJ, while Stu confesses to having seen the film *Billy Elliot*, '...but I watched that in my living room. I didn't go where people could see me!'.

Our focus groups show that questions of cultural taste are most likely to be organised around issues of sexuality, sometimes leading to light-hearted banter, on other occasions to more serious reflection and criticism. This is especially true for the younger groups. Interest in dancing leads to reflections about the sexualised involvement of men and women (from the rural service workers), but also from the gay men (where Arthur asks Dave if he 'dragged up' when he went dancing) and from the lesbians (leading to reflections on what kinds of men it is acceptable to dance with, with a general consensus that they should not be straight men). When members of the gay men's focus group identify an interest in David Beckham, an ironic query, 'for their sporting qualities?', leads to lots of laughter and a lively discussion over whether there are specifically gay cultural practices. The theatre is identified by several members. The lesbian focus group reveals an agonistic relationship to cultural practices aimed at women, not only to predominantly heterosexually-orientated women's magazines, but also to specifically lesbian-orientated forms: 'I can't even relate to all those bloody lesbian books, to be honest. ... A lot of them are just a pile of tosh, quite honestly. Somebody calls themselves a writer and calls themselves a lesbian they end up on the bookshelf', comments Ali. When the black middle-class men talk about their interest in men's magazines, it elicits defensive reactions before Anton notes that he likes them because there were 'chicks enough'. This then leads to extended reflections on the way that men and women are constructed by these magazines. The sexualised nature of men's magazines is also discussed by the business elites, and women professionals who talk about men as 'eye candy'. The low-paid women have an extended discussion about how women are sexualised in television programmes such as *Shameless* and *Footballers' Wives*, while the unskilled male workers joke that the appeal of classical music is that it 'got the women going'.

The general view expressed is that sexuality, rather than gender *per se*, is central to cultural life. We can assess whether this is supported by our survey data by examining the role of gender in structuring the cultural fields of music, visual art, reading, embodiment and the media. Chapter 3 showed that the third axis of our cultural map differentiates activities apparently 'outward'-orientated from 'inward'-orientated ones, overlapping with a gendered divide. While this axis accounts for only 7 per cent of the measured variance, it is nonetheless a significant

aspect of our cultural map. This is a key difference from Bourdieu's analysis, which sees gender as only a secondary effect (McCall, 1992; Weininger, 2005).

Reflecting on the third axis, only some practices are differentiated and taste is more important than participation (see Figure 3.3). Variables indicating participation at the bottom are playing football and club sport, and being less likely to eat out or to attend the cinema. Those located at the 'inward' pole of the axis, at the top, are more likely to go to musicals and night clubs. While differences in taste are more marked, this is only in specific areas, notably in watching television and film, and reading. There are only modest differences in the musical tastes between men and women. Those on the 'outward' location of the third axis are slightly more likely to enjoy rock and heavy metal, and those on the 'inward' locations are somewhat more attracted to urban music, and report disliking classical music. In the field of visual art, those positioned at the bottom are slightly more predisposed towards modern art and Impressionism, in particular, whereas those positioned at the top prefer landscapes, but again these differences are relatively modest. These findings are interesting in light of the fact that music and visual art are generally the most contested and intense fields. Such contestations are predominantly due to age and ethnicity, particularly in the case of music. The less class-divided fields, of reading and the media, exhibit stronger differences between 'inward' and 'outward' orientations. Reading, and watching television and film predominantly occur in the domestic arena, and indicate the structuring power of the 'outward–inward' divide. We prefer this contrast to the 'public–private' distinction, since its oppositions are partly *internal* to the private domestic field, though in the case of the 'outward' pole, they are concerned with activities outside the household, especially sport, news and current affairs, and the natural world. Importantly, only a few tastes are highly organised on this third axis; most obviously literary and film romance genres, which map on to 'inward' locations, and to a lesser extent, televised soap operas, contrasting with televised sport and western films, which are located on the 'outward' axis. Thus, a certain kind of public–private divide is re-inscribed *within* the domestic realm: men, for example, predominate among those who like programmes and books about the non-domestic world, like nature programmes, westerns, landscape art, sports, and news and current affairs programmes.

We have used the terms 'outward' and 'inward' to emphasise that the third axis does not map entirely on to gender. Not all men are outwardly orientated, and not all women are inward looking. Nevertheless, as Figure 3.7 shows, men and women are very clearly separated. There are scarcely any men at the top, or 'inward' pole, and few women at the bottom, although more women venture south than men move north. The crispness of the separation between genders – here organised primarily in terms of taste – is very striking, being much clearer than the distinctions between social classes on the first axis. Also the degree of separation between men and women barely changes between the left and right of the first axis. Gender is orthogonal, lying at right angles to the dimension of engagement and disengagement. By implication, the cultural differences on the third axis, shown to be related to gender, do not vary between

professional-executive class, intermediate and working-class occupations. In this respect, gendered taste differentiating 'outward' and 'inward' practices is generally independent of class divisions.

Using the same strategy as in Chapter 4, the accounts of individual men and women located on different parts of the third axis can be inspected. Figure 12.1 maps interviewees on axes 1 and 3. We have 15 women but only six men. This is because more women agreed to be contacted for this phase of the study (see Appendix 3).¹ However, where relevant, we can draw on interviews with co-resident partners, permitting a better gender balance (24 women and 20 men). Only two of the six men (Joe Smith and Jim Shaw) are firmly located in the 'outward' part of axis 3, towards the bottom. Of the 15 women from the survey who we interviewed, three (Rachel Griffiths, Margaret Staples and Molly McNab) are firmly in the 'inward' area of the axis, at the top.

The most discriminating gender opposition on the left side of the map is between Joe and Margaret, both of whom were introduced in Chapter 4. In terms of participation (axis 1) and taste (likes *and* dislikes) (axis 2), which we explored in that chapter, Joe and Margaret are much closer to one another than when axis 3 (which differentiates primarily between *likes*) is analysed.

Joe lies at the bottom, 'outward' end of axis 3, on the left of axis 1. We saw previously that he has little interest in, or knowledge of, established cultural practices and forms, being more interested in commercial forms of culture, notably sport and popular music. With the exception of his football and beer-drinking in pubs, where he is usually accompanied by his wife and friends, he follows masculine cultural pursuits largely at home, notably watching television, where sports are his preferred programmes, though he also likes nature and history documentaries. Nature documentaries chime with his 'country life' interests, but it is the action which captures his attention: 'I like to see the predators of the world ... the lions catch their prey...'. He most dislikes cookery, gardening and home decoration programmes. He mostly watches war movies, or action and adventure thrillers. The only book Joe says he has ever read is *Bravo Two Zero* by Andy McNab, an SAS soldier's account of the 1991 Gulf War. 'It kept me interested for a while. ... I read it on holiday, because I was bored'. This impression of a strong traditional masculine identity is emphasised by the fact that he does not do any cooking, though he helps with childcare.

Joe's wife Edie works 20 hours a week as a clerk, and shares childcare with her mother. She loves cooking ('I cook every evening a proper meal') and keeping a house nice. Many of her preferences are for activities found at the top of axis 3, such as for soap operas (notably *Coronation Street*) and cooking programmes. She hates horror films and likes romances. She says that she would also make an effort to look smart when she goes out on special occasions. When entertaining at home, she makes a particular effort to bring out the best dinner service. However, she does not fit every traditionally feminised stereotype: she is keen on DIY and woodwork.

Joe and Edie, then, are both dependent on, and themselves produce, a striking domestic division of labour. We might see Edie as deploying emotional capital

through her domestic role, confirming her caring role acting as a wider resource in the labour market or non-domestic setting. Equally, Joe deploys a version of technical capital in his employment. These contrasting tastes between Joe and Edie surface in the interview, leading to friendly banter which testifies to tensions between the cultural preferences arrayed on our third axis:

Interviewer: You've been watching *Coronation Street* fairly continuously?

Edie: Yeah! As much as Joe hates them! Joe doesn't like soaps at all.

Interviewer: So you watch these by yourself?

Edie: Well he's normally in here doing the washing up while *Coronation Street's* on so it works out quite well really. So ... yeah.

Interviewer: I've got to ask, what do you do when he's watching the soccer?

Edie: ... I normally have a nice hot shower, I get into bed, and watch what I wanna watch on telly.

A light-hearted yet also serious exchange about gendered taste, masculinities and femininities, emotional and technical capital, jostle against each other, skirmishes in a field organised within the home but in relation to practices located in different fields outside the home. Fortunately, the possession of two television sets allows both Joe and Edie to indulge their tastes at the same time. However, tension occurs less around actual practices (there does not appear to be any expectation that Joe might occasionally cook a meal, for instance, though he regularly washes up), than around taste. Interestingly, when Edie talks about eating out, 'which we do a lot', she slips into talking about 'we' and 'our', implying a joint set of practices for these public activities.

Margaret – whom we also met in Chapter 4 – sits at the left-hand side of the 'inward' area of the cloud of individuals. She and her husband offer something of a mirror to Joe and Edie. Margaret is very involved in childcare, reads a lot to her children, and uses books to help them understand life, like the recent loss of their granddad. She often has the television on in the background while doing housework. 'I wouldn't actually sit down in front of the TV for an hour watching in that sort of way...'. The children are involved in speech and drama, various sports, they all swim. Her group of school friends got married soon after leaving school. Margaret says 'when I was young, all I ever said I wanted was to get married and have children, which is what I did...'. She still sees her school friends a few times a year and has frequent phone contact with them. She got a local crèche going for the children, decorated the space and got it to meet different age group needs. She socialises with friends in couples, going out or entertaining at home.

Margaret's tastes contrast to those of her husband, Frank. He is a farmer, who built their house, and takes great pride in the family enterprise. Like Joe, Frank has a passion for sport, especially football and rugby. When talking about his favourite films, Frank says that 'Margaret's the boss', but notes that the ones he dislikes are those where 'people always end up crying'. He plays football, had been a keen snooker player, and is also active in a brass band. Frank would not cook for himself. When his wife is working and not able to cook, he goes round

to his mother's for his evening meal, where his children would also be, having been picked up by their granny from school or day care. He only occasionally helps the children with homework. A humorous exchange about gender roles ensues:

Frank: ... sometimes when the friends come up they'd bring a Chinese in, you know, that sort of thing...

Interviewer: And is it to sit and chat with, or would you watch the television or ...?

Frank: Aye, we'll chat, – no not really, the TV when they were here was just more or less turned off and then *Match of the Day* come on and he's an Arsenal supporter and I'm a Liverpool supporter so we just, you know, we're both interested in football again so we'd have it turned up! [laughs]...

Interviewer: So was there a sort of gender ..., do the women then...?

Frank: Yes, the women talk about babies! No, but generally the whole group would be in conversation about everything, just life in general and what's going on, and politics you know...

We can thus see again how Margaret and Frank's domestic relationship is a fractal, a miniature, of the third axis as a whole. In this respect, again, households combine individual dispositions, albeit in ways which are potentially fraught and open to dissension. There is, however, an asymmetry in the accounts of men and women. Whereas men who appear on the outward zone of our third axis differentiate themselves from their wives' tastes, the women who score more highly on the 'inward' parts of the third axis are less concerned to differentiate themselves from men, but are more orientated towards their children. This is the case for Margaret, who says relatively little about Frank, and is much more focused on her mothering responsibilities, and for Edie who is mainly responsible for childcare. Margaret and Joe, as well as their spouses Frank and Edie, have traditional gendered profiles, inserted in a culture where these gender patterns fit well. For Margaret, employment is much less important than her family, her children and home. Her caring activities are central to her social and cultural life. From an early age, she wanted to marry and be a mother pursuing the kind of traditional feminine personhood she has achieved.

The position is somewhat different for men and women on the right-hand side of the first axis. Here we can contrast the gendered profile of individuals with higher cultural capital, like Rachel and Jim. Our most extreme case in the 'inward' space of axis 3 is Rachel. Rachel is 26, a qualified youth worker in full-time temporary employment and is studying for a degree. We saw in Chapter 4 that she is a lone mother waiting for a mortgage approval to buy her own house. Her parents, living nearby, help with childcare. She likes *Sex in the City*, *Shameless* and *EastEnders*. She likes to read biographies 'because it's real'. But she also mentions having read and really enjoyed, as a kind of self-help, *Celestine Prophecy* a novel by therapist James Redfield, which she selects as her favourite. It is '... like about

things happening, it was like a journey ... saying things happen for a reason ...'. She dislikes 'horror' because it would play in her mind and she'd get scared. She enjoys a variety of music, but dislikes heavy metal, country and western and classical. She likes Indian food and Thai boxing, which is 'a good workout'. She thinks that clothes say 'a lot about a person', likes her 'high-street designer clothes', shopping in Top Shop and Selfridges, but is careful with spending. She entertains friends at home, cooking for them. She helps her daughter with her homework.

Rachel is a contrast to Jim, who is in the south-east quadrant of Figure 12.1. Jim is 64 years old, married to Jane, 65. They are white and have one married daughter with two children (19 and 12). Jim is from the local area. He is an engineer working for the building industry, currently semi-retired, working for the same firm as a consultant. After 23 years in a nearby village, they have been in their current house for 19 years. Their daughter, Jim's mother and Jane's sister live nearby. They have two cars: a BMW driven by Jim and a small Fiat driven by Jane for local shopping. Lifestyle revolves around work, pets (two cats), family and a flat in Majorca (which they have owned for 14 years), as well as illnesses. He has a heart problem. His wife has bone-marrow cancer. His favourite television programmes are comedies, sitcoms and sports: 'I just like sport obviously,... and I like having a laugh and wildlife'. He likes westerns 'John Wayne stuff'. Jim's first choice of reading is biography, particularly of sportsmen, about 'how they've come through what they've come through'. He singles out the story of a Scottish footballer, Jim Baxter, but would 'rather read the likes of car magazines or golf magazines', and quite likes the magazine *Classic Car*. He dislikes romance, and the musical genres he likes the most are rock, especially Elvis Presley, and jazz, especially Chris Barber. He likes to eat in steak houses. He plays golf. His wife does the cooking. He does the DIY, she does 'everything else'. Although it is clear that Jim is more affluent than Joe, and being much older, has different family circumstances, their accounts have considerable resonances in terms of their tastes for 'outward' cultural artefacts and practices. Although we cannot generalise from these limited cases, it is interesting to note that Rachel and Margaret, though similar in their spatial distance on the third axis to Joe and Jim, appear to inhabit more diverse spaces of femininity, while the masculinity expressed by Joe and Jim is more homogeneous.

Bearing in mind the limits in extrapolating from these few cases, we have some interesting indications of the complex relationship between gender and the items on the third axis. Rachel's cultural engagements are traditionally feminine and Jim's are traditionally masculine. While her choices and justifications fit the definition of the more female-orientated space, her position as a lone mother about to buy a house for herself involves a dissonance in terms of the traditional expectations of women's social role, which differ significantly from Margaret's case. Rachel's femininity has a different, more middle-class aspect. Her daughter is very important but so also are her work and financial position expressed in her imminent purchase of a house. Jim's retirement and illnesses seem to attenuate the contours of gender in relation to the pattern presented by Joe. Jim, by contrast, is firmly in the male

cultural space, which is also reflected in the complementary and symmetrical partnership he has with his wife Jane.

12.4 Contested gender identities

One of the advantages of working with the cloud of individuals is that it reveals that some men and women diverge from traditional gender norms. Figure 12.1 shows some contrasts between men and women here. Women are slightly more likely to appear in the outward zone, below the middle of the third axis, than are men in the inward zone. This may reflect a greater concern on the part of men to avoid female activities than for women to avoid male activities, which are more legitimate and socially sanctioned. Accordingly, women are slightly more dispersed around the third axis than are men. Men are more uniform in their gendered practices than women.

Figure 12.1 also shows, perhaps surprisingly, that the degree of separation between genders does not vary according to location on the first axis. It is not the case that men located at the 'culturally engaged' side of axis 1 are any less likely to be in the outward location than those who are on the left-hand side and less engaged with the items of culture we explored in the survey. Nor is it the case that women on the left, less culturally engaged, side of the first axis are any more, or less, 'internal' than women who are on the more culturally engaged side. In this section, the accounts of those men and women located in the centre of the third axis are used to explore how far it is possible for women to embody outward practices, and men inward ones.

Compare Ruth Richards with Seren Star. Both are located in the apparently 'male' area just below the middle of the outward side of the third axis, but Ruth is on the left, and Seren on the right. Seren is a divorced 57-year-old living on her own. She has bright red hair, recently re-dyed from purple. She has a son, aged 27, who lives quite far away, and a granddaughter. She has a boyfriend aged 30. She is a social worker, working with 'stropky adolescents'. She owns her small terraced house and has been there for 19 years, with five more years to finish paying off her mortgage. She has a car as part of her job. She is not vested in tidiness. The interviewer noted that '...she had to clear me a space from the mess in order for me to be able to sit ... she was quite clear that her home was just somewhere to keep warm, and that she had little interest in it'.

Seren appears to take pleasure in being a little eccentric. Her favourite television programmes are drama and police/detective programmes. She says she lives her life as 'a bit of a drama queen ... sometimes I have tantrums, sometimes I do what I need to do to get what I want'. She dislikes most 'anything that tries to educate me'. '... television is about taking me out of reality... The drama stuff is just pure entertainment ... Escapism and fantasy... you don't have to think too much'. Her favourite film is *Shirley Valentine*,² 'a so true story for middle-aged women'. She likes reading self-help books because it is 'a part of what I do with the kids is teach them to do things for themselves ...'. And who-dunnits are 'about the escapism ... where everything works out in the end'. Yet, she dislikes romances.

She likes rock music and dislikes country and western. Her favourite place to eat is Italian restaurants. She doesn't like fast food. She loves walking with her spaniel dog, 'a great stress reliever'. She used to play darts. She's into recycling clothes, taking 'great pride in being able to get an outfit together'. 'I'm wandering around in a cashmere and wool coat that cost me a tenner, you know?... I will occasionally splurge out on expensive shoes ... I could be Imelda'.³ Being on the 'outward' side of the cultural map does not mean that Seren adopts a masculine identity. She clearly has a very strong female identity, but it is one which emphasises the 'agency' of being a woman of *her* choice, for instance, adopting the role of 'drama queen', being 'untidy' or identifying with Shirley Valentine.

Ruth, by contrast, is an elderly, working-class resident of a Scottish council estate, where she lives close to her daughter and grandson. Having been mother to 11 children, and a 'housewife' since the 1960s, she is recently widowed, yet seems buoyant and optimistic about her future life. Of all the women we interviewed, she is furthest towards the bottom, outward, pole of the third axis. She has a predilection for gangster films (James Cagney being a particular favourite), singles out 'police' soap operas as ones she enjoys, and likes watching all sports except cricket (though she liked playing cricket when younger). She is a Chelsea fan, in part a legacy of being brought up in London. In an interesting discussion of her cinematic taste, she objects to fantasy films on the grounds that it is unrealistic for love scenes to be placed in the middle of war films, implying that it is her interest in the war that is paramount. Ruth has no fear of being identified with a set of physical, outward, tastes, though she combines these with some classically feminine tastes, in her case a liking for Mills and Boon romances. Her matriarchal role, living close to her large family, seems to allow her a certain latitude and, like Seren, allows her to combine a strong female identity with outward tastes.

There are other women who, like Ruth, combine outward tastes with clearly feminised roles. Sally-Ann Lewis, from Northern Ireland, a 'doctor's wife' for 49 years, is struggling to find a new identity for herself, having recently been widowed. Although trained as a nurse, she remarks that after having children 'I never did work because I couldn't have worked. You couldn't work, doctor's wives couldn't work'. Sally-Ann's identification with her husband explains her love of sport and her interest in war films. Similarly, Janet Taggart had looked after her children when they were younger and, although she now has a demanding full-time career as warden in a custodial home, she continues to defer to her husband, placing the needs of his job before hers. Both Sally-Ann and Janet reject the superficial and 'unreal' world of 'feminine' soap operas. Janet emphasizes her 'serious', spiritual orientation, leading her to an appreciation of Martina Cole novels and classical music. Both are vested in a kind of 'respectability', which involves a distancing from what they see as superficial 'feminine' tastes and an engagement with what they see as more 'serious' cultural tastes. We thus see how location in the outward space does not mean that women cannot embody conventional gendered views. Perhaps they appear in the south of the border because they like news and current affairs.

We can contrast these two women with the men located on the 'inward' side. James Foot is a 38-year-old father of two girls, 4 and 1 years old. His wife is a hospital consultant of Indian descent. They live in a large house. We saw in Chapter 4 that James is a university lecturer in the relatively feminine area of 'arts and drama' and has a senior administrative job. He is very busy – the interview took almost three months to organise. James involves his daughter in the interview, and there is a lot of interruption for drawing materials, appraisal of pictures and questions asked. James endorses 'casual' dress 'for very practical reasons ... milk stains ... and chocolate fingerprints'. He cooks all meals and talks fluently about the meal he had prepared the evening before, though for big 'dos' with guests his wife cooks. James displays some 'male' tastes: his favourite television programmes are news and current affairs, also history documentaries fascinate him because of old photographs and old footage of interviews, which he enjoys with a professional eye.

Yet, although comfortable to emphasise his domestic aptitudes, James is careful to differentiate himself from 'unrespectable' programmes such as *EastEnders*, soaps and reality television. He loves drama films. In literature he dislikes romances, though he qualifies this: 'I like the classics ... *Dr Zhivago* and things like that, they were great ... *Pride and Prejudice*... I don't like the *Bridget Jones* stuff'. His favourite film is *Fanny and Alexander*, directed by Ingmar Bergman, 'made in the 1980s', he says knowledgeably, describing the film: 'It starts on Christmas day, 1900 ... just this one family and like everything is in there ...'. He's also interested in biographies, linking it to his interest for documentaries and history and cites reading Orson Welles. He doesn't do physical exercises for lack of time but used to swim while taking his elder daughter to swimming lessons. He used to play squash and badminton, and watches racquet sports on television. He has no interest in cars, does a bit of gardening, 'growing vegetables and things like that'.

James is interesting in showing no explicitly strong signs of masculine identity. He is strongly focused on his academic career, where he is currently completing a book, and is highly committed to his family, and especially looking after his young children. In talking about his tastes, he adopts preferences from his children (for *The Simpsons*) and from his wife: *Absolutely Fabulous*, '... my wife's a big fan of that and I've always quite liked that'. Other than a concern to differentiate himself from a 'Bridget Jones' feminine position, there is no overt concern to proclaim a 'new man' or alternative masculine identity, in a way equivalent to Seren's proud declaration of an alternative femininity, which counters critically to traditional femininity. Men who appear on the more 'inward' side of the third axis do so by downplaying their masculinity, not by giving it an alternative form.

James's wife, Susan Mirza, provides an interesting contrast. She is a doctor with a very busy and involving occupation, which entails James, with his flexible academic hours, playing the prime housekeeping role. Susan's tastes are predominantly 'outwardly' oriented: she likes television news, nature and history documentaries, but she does not like soap operas. *Pulp Fiction* is her favourite film. Admittedly, she likes romantic novels, though of the 'classic' Jane Austen type. She emphasizes that 'James does the cooking' and, unlike the interviews of the

couples mentioned in Section 12.2, there is no sign of humorous exchanges and references about these kinds of activities fitting with gender roles. Indeed, Susan's interview is characterised by banter with her daughter who turns out to have a better memory for who had visited the house recently. Her role is to cook on special occasions. However, unlike James, this is consistent with a feminised identity: she notes, knowingly, that she likes Johnny Depp, and her response to a vignette about socially embarrassing situations is confident enough to relate a story about knickers and menstruation to the female interviewer.

Oh, when I was little, when I was about thirteen, my knickers fell down and that was really embarrassing but everyone realised that, and that was ... just like everybody stopped ... [...] It's like my mother-in-law who's seventy-five, she, she's always clearing up around us. And I get really embarrassed because she picks up my sanitary towels and things like that and I say 'Oh, don't do that, you know? [...] she says 'Oh, don't worry about it. It's not important.' And I think to myself, she's, she's grown up with so many young women in her house, because she run a sort of boarding house for girls, that it means nothing to her.

Susan seems to exemplify here a kind of assertive, professional female identity, which recognises its own gendering, whereas her husband James's identity makes no reference to his maleness. While the differences could relate to James' and Susan's rapport with the female interviewer (it might have looked askance for James to reflect on his underwear), as other researchers have also emphasised (Halford, Savage and Witz, 1997; Connell, 2002) men do not recognise gender as readily as women. As Adkins (2002) argued, the tensions of having continuously to negotiate conflictive female roles at home and in the workplace creates and increases gender reflexivity among women, questioning conventions of femininity (see also Postone, LiPuma and Calhoun, 1993; McNay, 2000).

James is an interesting contrast to Vasudev Rehman, who also appears on the inward area, and to Robert Scroggie, who is located in the middle of axis 3. Vasudev, who as we saw in Chapter 4, is a self-made businessman of Indian Sikh descent, comfortably off, working in the Midlands. Although placed on the left-hand side of the first axis, he in fact has intense cultural interests, focused around his involvement in religious and anti-imperialist writing. Despite his success in business, he makes it clear that he has no ambition to make money, and his aspirations focus on the expressive aspects of his writing. Also interesting is his explicit concern with inward cultural activities. When explaining why he dislikes science fiction, he revealingly notes that 'If anything is gentle, it pleases me, it can please me, yeah'. He does not like most physical sports, but makes an exception for meditative yoga, explaining its appeal in terms of a religious and spiritual register of signification.

That is much softer exercise, but this yoga, Pranayama, it has something different to achieve, yoga Pranayama means you are to become one with

god, in other words it is mainly for the brain and if the brain is relaxed your body automatically gets relaxed. Tai chi also aims at that but mostly they concentrate on the body movements so that's the only difference that I have found. Sometimes I coordinate both of them, for example, I do Pranayama yoga first and after that if I feel my neck is stiff, I use exercises which we do in Tai chi.

Of all the men we interviewed, Vasudev is most unusual in espousing an inward identity. He is widowed, and lives alone, his children having all left home. He has little social contact with others, apart from acquaintances, including his neighbour whom he sees in the pub and watches television with. His distance from a gendered identity is associated with a certain detachment from company. In this respect (though in few others), he is similar to the elderly white, working-class Scot, Robert Scroggie, a former alcoholic who reports that he 'cannot mix in with company' for fear of slipping back into drinking.

Still depressed following the death of his wife three years earlier, Robert's account is strongly focused on her, evoking her frequently and wistfully. His favourite television programmes are documentaries and nature and history documentaries. He has 'no time for soaps'. He dislikes science fiction. He enjoys reading biographies: David Niven, Dirk Bogarde and Judy Garland. Unusually for a man, he likes reading romances and mentions films like *Gone with the Wind* and *Untamed*. He also enjoys John Steinbeck, remarking that his books have 'no violence in them'. Attachments to both inward and outward practices and cultural items are present in Robert's accounts. He feeds and looks after his grandchildren, reads biographies of women and watches films with romantic content. He dislikes violence. This is balanced by a dislike of the most female identified item, soaps, and an enjoyment of documentaries, nature programmes and adventure novels. Both in terms of gendered profiles of cultural taste and in terms of cultural participation Robert, like Vasudev, eschews an outward male identity. In both cases, their lack of overt stakes in the competitive world of professional esteem and business success appear to give them a certain freedom to espouse a 'self-referenced' identity, different from James, who appears more fraught and harried. These men live relatively private lives, without extensive contact with other men, or indeed women.

The interviews show more diversity in the accounts of men who do not espouse outward tastes and of women who do not uphold inward ones compared to their more conventional counterparts. In general, women who appear in the outward sectors of the third axis are socially involved in their employment, in contacts with other women, and in their own households, whereas men who appear inwardly orientated tend to be less vested in masculinity and more socially detached. There are more versions of female praxis in evidence from our interviews, ranging from 'traditional womanhood' (Margaret and Edie), to a form of 'independent femininity' (Rachel), 'alternative professional' (Seren, Susan), 'outward matriarchal' (Ruth) and 'respectable' (Sally-Ann and Janet). By contrast there is a much more marked male form, of outward masculinity, either strongly

held (as with Joe and Jim) or weakly held (as with James, Vasudev and Robert). Although it would be wrong to generalise from these examples, they suggest interesting asymmetries in the range of cultural practices for men and women in relation to both public and private worlds.

12.5 Conclusion

In this chapter we have focused specifically on the ways in which gender relates to cultural capital, operating differently in association with particular kinds of femininities and masculinities. The third axis of the cultural map identifies the prevalence of inward and outward cultural tastes. We have intentionally avoided conflating gender with specific masculine and feminine cultural tastes, or with particular kinds of emotional or technical capital. Some women operate within more masculine spaces of lifestyles and some men draw on and perform cultural practices identified as feminine. Nor is there a direct link with the deployment of emotional capital. Women located in the outward sector of our cultural map, like Sally-Ann and Janet, are as vested in the deployment of emotional capital as are those, such as Rachel or Edie, who are located in the inward section. In unravelling the complexity of gender and cultural practice, we part company with Bourdieu's analyses of gender premised on the sexed body.

As to whether cultural capital is a household or an individual resource, it is best considered a relational resource operating at the level of the household in dynamic relationships between people living together. It both operates differently between different individuals and also acts as a resource at the level of the household. Gender and household type are involved in several ways in the organisation of cultural capital. First, although women and men are located in similar positions on the first axis of our cultural map, there are important differences in their household relationships. Professional-executive men are more likely than professional-executive women to live in conventional households. By contrast, women form the professional-executive class more frequently live in single households or in partnerships with working-class men. Thus, the diversification of household relations accentuates and intensifies class and gender inequalities in the organisation of cultural practices and tastes.

Second, gender is an important structuring force in the organisation of cultural tastes and practices, in ways which are irreducible to class or age. This is evident from the way that gender so closely tracks the third axis, but not the first or second. This divide is not organised as a public-private divide *per se*, but according to outward and more inward dispositions towards domestic activities. We observed that some partnerships tend to match particular models of femininity and masculinity, contrasting a well-defined traditional femininity (for example, tastes for soap opera and romance) with a strong traditional masculinity (outdoor pursuits, football, war, etc.) within households.

Third, the detailed accounts of men and women located in different parts of the cultural map, suggest that female cultural repertoires are more varied and versatile than those of men. Accounts are asymmetrical: those men who are least vested

in traditional masculine practices are still concerned to differentiate themselves symbolically from feminine tastes, and have relatively muted, but still masculine identities. By contrast, women in equivalent positions show less concern to dis-identify with female tastes or to identify with male ones. Yet these women are also able to articulate feminine identities, fusing femininity with professional or outward identifications. Stereotypes of traditional gender roles are contested more strongly among those individuals with higher cultural capital, who command a greater variety of transferable types of cultural capital. Possibly, with a more rigid and less varied range of cultural capitals available, being a feminine woman, or a masculine man, operates as cultural capital in itself among the working class. A more fluid gender style has greater currency among the women and men from the professional-executive class.

13 Nation, ethnicity and globalisation

13.1 Introduction

Bourdieu wrote at a time when the nation state was frequently elided with ‘society’ and when immigration from former colonies had not yet significantly challenged metropolitan assumptions. It is clear from his earlier work on Algeria that Bourdieu was deeply interested in questions concerning the relations between ethnicity and colonialism (Bourdieu, 1979), just as, in his later work, he was expressly concerned with the meagre cultural capital holdings of migrants (Bourdieu *et al.*, 1999: 424). However, these concerns do not figure strongly in *Distinction*, which depicts the social as more-or-less entirely a nationally bounded entity, unaffected by trans-national flows of people and cultures. In Chapter 2 we noted that Bourdieu could not ask about the ethnicity of his respondents or their countries of origin. The consequent depiction of France as ethnically undifferentiated was matched by a corresponding focus on his respondents’ relations to a territorially bounded repertoire of cultural items. When Bourdieu asked his respondents whether they knew or liked particular named cultural items, his examples were, with the exception of films, exclusively European, and mainly French. All of the painters he asked about, from Leonardo da Vinci through to Picasso, belonged to the European high art tradition and, although the favourite musical works he included ranged across ‘highbrow’ and more popular works, they were all European. The favourite singers he asked about were all French except for Petula Clark who, although born in England, had, by the mid-1960s, married a Frenchman, lived in France, and sang and recorded mainly in French. Only his questions about films opened up an otherwise exclusively Euro-French cultural horizon to the influence of American culture by including films like *Singing in the Rain* and *The Magnificent Seven* alongside contemporary French films. This was because the films he listed were those showing in Paris at the time of his survey, and so reflected the role of international market forces more than his other questions.

Neither of these absences is particularly surprising given the intellectual and political contexts of the time. The traditions of French republicanism militated against according ethnicity much theoretical or political significance; few social science surveys at that time included questions focused on ethnic identifications and, as we have noted, such questions were illegal in France; and debates about

the relations between culture and globalisation were a good twenty years away. Nonetheless, they have become increasingly glaring limitations, prompting a number of attempts to correct them by expanding the concept of cultural capital to make it more responsive to transnational movements of people and culture and devising means of applying these new conceptualisations of cultural capital empirically.

This has been particularly true of work initiated in the American tradition of cultural sociology, but now also involving European researchers, that has sought to devise empirical means of assessing the specific effect of ethnicity on the organisation, distribution and transmission of cultural capital relative to that of other variables. Paul DiMaggio and Francie Ostrower's (1992) identification of the specific role of race and ethnicity in determining rates of participation in the arts in America is one of the earliest studies of this kind. The work of Bethany Bryson and Bonnie Erickson has, however, proved more influential. Bryson (1996), drawing on Peterson's omnivore/univore thesis and Lamont's work on the role of culture in marking both raced and classed symbolic boundaries (Lamont, 2000), interprets the capacity to range across musical genres with a wide range of different ethnic associations as a form of 'multicultural capital' that is most strongly associated with the professional and managerial classes who, at the same time, show a marked aversion to musical genres with strong lower-class associations. Although Erickson's concern is primarily with the relations between cultural capital, class and social connections, she also explores the differences between the Canadian and overseas-born members of her sample to show the significance of place of birth in shaping knowledge of and participation in 'mainstream' cultural practices (Erickson, 1996). More recently, Sandra Trienekens (2002) has argued that ethnic orientation, as measured by strength of affiliation to specific ethnic organisations, religions and language use, is more important in influencing participation in 'highbrow culture' than country of origin. This leads her to develop the valuable conception of community-based forms of cultural capital, where community-specific cultural practices are associated with the organisation of hierarchical distinctions within minority ethnic communities. However, these do not have a more general social currency outside such communities. The work of Frits van Wel and his collaborators (2006) points in the same direction by probing the different relations to Dutch culture on the part of young Dutch people compared to second-generation Moroccan, Turkish, and Surinam or Antillean youths.

Yet, because these studies rely on pre-existing survey data, most of their discussion focuses on responses to questions about genre, which are a blunt instrument for registering different degrees of affiliation to the national and international provenance of different cultural practices.¹ Furthermore, since all of these studies are based exclusively on survey data, they are unable to convey any sense of how the members of either minority or majority ethnic groups themselves express, see and interpret their position in relation to the organisation of national cultural fields and the flow of cultural practices across these.

A second body of literature seems, on the face of it, to overcome these difficulties. For a decade and more, social theorists have emphasised how

globalisation creates new kinds of cultural possibilities which shatter national boundaries and permit new fluidities in the movement of people, signs, artefacts and identities (Robertson, 1995; Albrow, 1997; Castells, 1996/67; Cohen G., 1997; Szerszynski and Urry, 2002). During the 1990s, it was common to argue that these flows promoted new kinds of homogeneous spaces, or what Marc Augé (1995) famously called 'non-places'. The world of shopping malls and motorway interchanges, airport lounges, waterfront developments and suburban estates seemed to evoke new kinds of global spaces that could be found in all nations. More recently, in the wake of intensified geopolitical tensions, the focus has switched to how global flows are implicated in new kinds of diasporic identities, which involve the proliferation of diverse cultural signifiers and the recognition that global connections also produce diversity (Appadurai, 1996; Papastergiadis, 2000; Kalra *et al.*, 2005). Arjun Appadurai's conception of proliferating flows of different 'scapes' has been especially influential in pointing to how distinct identities are constructed through mobilising specific imaginaries that span, and possibly undermine, the territorial boundaries of national cultures.

This literature also recognises that the capacity to mobilise different cultural referents and imaginaries is connected to different positions of power at the intersections of national and trans-national cultures. On the one hand lie those who are able to use the mobility they derive from their high levels of cultural capital to acquire and deploy new forms of 'cosmopolitan' cultural capital. Calhoun (2003) defines cosmopolitan and liberal values as complicit with the world view of corporate executive 'frequent travellers', while Hage, in a similar vein, refers to such groups as 'white cosmopolites' (Hage, 2000). On the other hand lie those whose mobility is a marker of their exclusion and marginalisation: the asylum seeker or 'economic migrant', typically working within the unskilled or semi-skilled sectors of advanced Western economies and frequently without civic or political rights. Members of such groups, Hage argues, suffer from a double jeopardy: excluded from the cosmopolitan forms of cultural capital that bind trans-national elites together around key marker institutions like art galleries, they are also unable to claim and mobilise those specifically national forms of cultural capital that confer on 'host' populations the advantages of specific forms of national belonging that are not readily available to minorities. Here, attachments to trans-national cultures are more likely to take the form of continuing involvements in diasporic cultures within which specific forms of cultural knowledge function as cultural assets whose value is realised in and through distinctive trans-national networks of circulation.

In contrast to American cultural sociology, these accounts exhibit sensitivity to the complex relations between both peoples in movement and cultures in movement. While not denying the continuing pertinence of national conceptions of the organisation of the social, they have insisted on the increasing salience of social and cultural relationships that traverse national boundaries.² However, empirical work capable of providing a basis for an informed assessment of these various claims and counter-claims is sparse – though see Werbner's account of Pakistanis in Manchester (2002); Byrne's (2006) study of white

mothers; and Savage *et al.*'s (2005a) study of white middle-class residents near Manchester.

Our primary concern in this chapter is to point to some of the ways in which the shortcomings of these two traditions might be overcome by drawing on our survey and interview data. Our discussion has two main aspects, both serving to elaborate critically on the findings from our MCA that ethnicity does not play a strong role in the organisation of the social space of lifestyles in contemporary Britain. As reported in Chapter 3, and against our expectations, ethnicity is not as strongly correlated with our cultural map as are class, education, age and gender divisions. This apparent lack of association exists even though we made a serious attempt to explore the cultural practices of the three largest ethnic minorities in Britain in some detail by conducting a boost sample amongst the Indian, Pakistani and Afro-Caribbean communities. However, because we constructed this space through questions on tastes and preferences for genres (but not named works) in the literary, art, music, sports and media fields, we are not readily able to pick up on the more nuanced, though powerful, ways that ethnicity is related to cultural tastes.

Our subsidiary concern focuses on the relationship between our survey data on the one hand and our semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions on the other. The latter reveal some striking differences between the cultural tastes and participation of various ethnic groups, and powerfully different understandings of the organisation of the cultural field itself, which are not evident from our analysis of the survey data. We begin our analysis by exploring the reasons for the discrepant findings from these different aspects of the research.

An interesting example is Majid Raza, an elderly man, originally from Pakistan, who lives with his wife and children in cramped premises above a main shopping street. He is immediately aware that the interview was a public show, and he makes a point of showing that he likes drama and news programmes. He is keen to 'translate' his preferences into terms that a white middle-class interviewer might recognise, saying that he likes 'Indian' soap operas, and then saying that the only book he had read was the Koran, which he identifies as 'the holy bible, you see'. However, during the course of the interview, it becomes clear that most of his answers were given from a position outside many of our cultural referents. Majid seems to understand few of our questions, and the vignette where we ask him to imagine himself in an embarrassing situation in a pub completely passes him by – it is doubtful he had ever been to a pub in his life. It is only after the interview finishes, when the tape recorder is switched off, and he offers tea to the interviewer, that he warms up, and initiates an intense discussion about his dislike of George Bush, Tony Blair and the general problems of the post-9/11 world, about which he feels very strongly. Although he had always supported Labour, he does not know who to vote for at the next election.

In short, and as Silva and Wright (2008) explore more fully, interview responses need to be interpreted in the light of the discursive strategies of the interviewee, especially when, as in this case, this involves negotiations across ethnic boundaries in relation to a project identified as the product of established,

white academics. And, whereas the experience of conducting the interviews, or having extensive field notes about them, allows us to recognise how interviews are systematically organised as a social occasion, survey methods preclude such contextual information.

Also, most ethnic minorities do not speak entirely from the margins, and in focus-group situations, where ethnic minorities speak from a collective position, more confident and assertive attitudes are evident. Many of the interviews with individual members of the ethnic boost sample also elicit more confident testimonies, though we will continue to see how a recognition of cultural marginality colours the accounts. The unusual scope of our qualitative material allows us to re-evaluate the apparent absence of association between ethnicity and culture in the survey data.

13.2 Home and away

Our qualitative data reveal a complex cultural geography. Respondents do not relate simply to one 'national' culture, but evoke cultural referents and icons from diverse locations. In Appadurai's (1996) terms, they exhibit a mobile imaginary. That said, our respondents vary in how they position themselves with respect to different cultural locations, often showing a sense of being uneasily installed between two cultures, sharing elements of both but being completely at home in neither.

This is a thread running through our interview with Surbhitra Gopal, a 53-year-old Indian woman who, at the time of the interview, had lived in England for 32 years. Having worked full-time for many years, with her husband Nimesh, running local shops, they had recently sold the business and she now works part-time as a dinner supervisor at a local school. The coordinates that most actively organise the terms in which she answers our questions are those provided by the categories of English and Indian culture and – as a not quite isomorphic set of contrasts – by her dislike of 'the old' and her fondness for tradition, a term she invokes as a contrast to the problematic aspects of both contemporary and old English life. Having spent her late adolescence and early adult years in Britain, she is familiar with and likes many aspects of English commercial popular culture. However, she interprets English as a language rather than a national category in the sense that many of the examples of the 'English' films that she likes are American or trans-Atlantic: *Independence Day*, *Titanic* and the James Bond films. But she is passionate in her dislike of 'old England'. In explaining why she quite likes David Hockney's *Paper Pools* but not Turner's *The Fighting Temeraire*, Surbhitra, prompted as to whether she generally prefers modern to older kinds of picture, cuts the question short, saying, quite vehemently, 'I don't like old things, I don't. It's not, I don't like old furniture, I don't. Not old, old, old'. She returns to this theme a little later, but amplifying it in ways which establish a connection between the notions of old and 'old England':

Some people do, they're really into it, Shakespeare and all that, and I've been to the Shakespeare village you know, OK for interest. We did Shakespeare

at school, you went to – England you come to England we teach Shakespeare at school, this is what they were talking about. But I've seen it once, I wouldn't like to go again, no. Even old buildings, old churches.

Surbhitra listens regularly to Indian channels on radio and satellite television, and is fond of both Hindi movies and Hindi music, now strongly preferring the latter to the pop music – The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, Elvis, Cliff Richard – that had been her favourite music in the 1960s. It is, however, as we saw in Chapter 9, when she speaks of her fondness for traditional Indian dress that the logic of 'tradition' as a term for something that is an active contemporary force in her life, but at the same time not modern, not English, and certainly not 'old England', becomes clear:

Again it's still our bringing up, isn't it, it's really cultural. ... And, I think we Indians, we Hindus, we were very, our upbringing was really cultural. If you go out of line it was the talk of the town, right. So I think that we were always aware of that, if we had gone like bunked school, like you miss a lesson, you just couldn't do that. You think about it but you always think, if I am found out, then what? ... And I still say that OK when you go to your in-laws make sure you are traditionally dressed you know.

It is this set of contrasts that informs her different senses of where home is and of what being at home means. Close to the start of the interview, she says that she feels at home where she lives now: 'So, it's like it's you know the area and I wouldn't like to move elsewhere, it's home'. But when asked what kind of house she would like if money were no object, it is the home she came from that provides her first point of reference as she opts for a bungalow, 'like back home', and a large garden. She then immediately qualifies this, installing herself between two homes with a not quite settled sense of where her preferences lie:

I've just got a small garden, but back home we've got a lot. ... I think you grow with, because I lived here longer than home, only if you tell me now that you go back to stay for good, I wouldn't go back because it [here] has been my home now for 32 years.

Yet Surbhitra sees herself as having sorted out the relations between being 'home and away' better than her husband: 'My husband is not into English movies. Somehow, I mean he speaks English, he lives here, but sometimes he is lost! [Laughs] He's lost the whole thing you know, so ...'. At 60, Nimesh is older than Surbhitra and, like her, he has retired from their earlier shared life running a business and now works full-time as a catering supervisor for a meals-on-wheels service. It is true that he conveys a somewhat more on-edge set of relations to both English and Indian culture.

When he realises that his dream house does not have to be in England, he opts to locate it in Africa as a way of escaping the blight of poor weather that would

mar its location in England and that of religious conflict in India.³ When it comes to personal choice of cuisine, however, he gives a sense of wishing to maintain the integrity of a body that is thoroughly nationalised as Indian:

I am mostly vegetarian and plus I like spices, a little bit of flavour or something like that so maybe that's how I was brought up and the taste. I don't mind trying, I have tried English dishes as well, I've tried Chinese as well, but still I will stick to Indian because I know what it is, I am used to it, I know something what I eat, I am sure of that, that it won't harm me, or it's easy for me to digest.

Unlike Surbhitra, however, Nimesh likes many aspects of traditional English culture (Surbhitra's 'old England'). His favourite book is Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*, though he stresses that his interest in Shakespeare is pursued alongside his continuing reading of Gujarati literature. Similarly, he speaks of his liking for classical music and opera – and, indeed, for Scottish and Spanish music – alongside his continuing liking of traditional Hindi music. These 'cross-over' tastes are partly a reflection of Nimesh's interpretation of his parental responsibilities. Dwelling at some length on his role in helping his children (both of whom went to university) with their homework and school life more generally, Nimesh articulates a clear understanding of the relations between education, getting on in life and the role of a familiarity with English culture in this.

Although much more confident than Majid Raja, neither Surbhitra nor Nimesh entirely belongs in the nation they have been living in for three decades. While they both have an impressive cultural repertoire in common with the British white population, there is an oscillation in their accounts – different though they are – regarding their location between two different cultures with different senses of tradition.

The case of Stafford, a 60-year old Afro-Caribbean man living close to the centre of a Midlands city is similarly revealing. Stafford is actually the most 'typical' of our interviewees in his cultural tastes and participation, located nearly at the centre of the first and second axes of our cultural map. However, his interview reveals subtle ways in which he remains an 'outsider'. Like Nimesh and Surbhitra, he is a first-generation migrant and, although he has lived in the United Kingdom (UK) for over 50 years, he refers to his native St Kitts and Nevis as his homeland. When explaining his preference for news and current affairs programmes on television, it is similarly their ability to connect his life back to where he came from that he stresses:

Probably because, I'm not from here, I came here when I was in my teens but I still like to know what's happening around the world, in the Caribbean and places like that.

When Stafford is not at work, or doing his domestic chores, the organising foci of his cultural life are reading the bible and listening to classical music on the

radio – preferring this to the rhythm and blues music of his youth. What he does most of all, though, is watch sport on television. This, particularly through such ‘global’ events as the Olympics or the Commonwealth games, provides another sense of connection with home. He speaks, for example, with some pride of the triumph of a St Kitts’ sprinter at the 2002 Commonwealth games. Yet sport also allows a narrative of Stafford’s ‘Britishness’ to emerge, as he contrasts his preference for watching the premier league with other football codes:

Baseball and ice hockey, I’m not into those kind of sports you know. I don’t like, I just don’t look at it because I don’t understand it and I don’t want to understand it because it’s not do you know what I mean ... it’s like looking at Gaelic football or Australian football you don’t know what they’re doing, kicking each other and everything you know.

The complex geography of cultural connection is further illustrated by Karim Rashid. Born in Pakistan, Karim came to England when he was three in 1975 and is considerably younger than Surbithra, Nimesh and Stafford. He had married his wife in Pakistan through an arranged marriage, and his wife had only recently moved to live with him in Britain and spoke little English. Yet, Karim is keen to distance himself from traditional Pakistani and South Asian culture. When asked about his dream home, he says it will have to combine history and character with modern convenience, evoking an imaginary that is entirely English: ‘I’d like to live in the sort of old cottage, 200-year-old cottage, but be able to still press buttons and things and have things working for me, do you know?’ Similarly, although in answering the survey he had indicated Indian restaurants as his favourite dining choice, he is at pains to make it clear that this is mainly a result of family and peer-group pressure and that, left to himself, he prefers to eat Italian, Mexican and English food, and especially fish-and-chips – pretty well anything but Indian. His fashion sense is modern and resolutely Western, and he pointedly underlines his dislike of Bollywood and Indian popular music. But this is as much about his concern to distance himself from certain kinds of popular culture as it is about his relationship to Asian culture. When describing his ideal home, Karim tellingly remarks: ‘So it’s, again it’s typical of me, if you notice I’m very in the middle aren’t I with everything? I want a bit of both, I want the best of everything don’t I?’ As a young health and safety consultant, still living in modest circumstances but with a sense of a career before him, Karim does indeed knowingly place himself in the middle of the cultural field in many of his preferences: he doesn’t like country and western music, but likes reggae and music with a political message, singling out the British reggae band UB40 in particular, and has a tentative relationship to classical music; he dislikes reality television, preferring programmes like *Panorama*, and Channel 4 is his favourite channel; he talks knowingly about Quentin Tarantino films; and he likes most sports, but distances himself from golf and tennis because of their elitist associations.

Karim’s sense of being ‘in the middle’ is most marked, however, when he presents his relations to Islam on the one hand and to Western secular culture

on the other. When reminded that he had indicated religious books as one of his favourite kinds of reading in his answers to the survey, Karim immediately qualifies this, saying that his real preferences are for horror, thrillers and science fiction, explaining that he had chosen religious books because he was from a religious family, and because of the general sensitivity to religious issues in the Muslim community post-9/11. Committed to a religious upbringing for his children – they are encouraged to read the Koran, and are taught Urdu – there is, at the same time, a strategic secularism in play here: his children are sent to a faith school, yes, but a Catholic one; they are encouraged to pray five times a day, but through the inducement of a 20p per prayer payment.

A similar tactical positioning is evident among members of the Indian and Pakistani focus groups. Moin, a Pakistani taxi-driver and student in his early twenties, finds things to like and admire in both *The Matrix* and the Bollywood success, *Devdas*. Whilst he enjoyed the former for its special effects, he had, he says, ‘never seen anything like’ the latter. American culture here is interpreted as commercial and valued for its price tag (they had, Moin enthuses, spent \$269 million making this film) while *Devdas* is appreciated for being more authentic. Being able to enjoy both films is, for Moin, a sign of his ability to shift and switch his cultural allegiances. Other members of the Asian focus groups, however, express a strong dislike of Hindi and Bollywood films, finding them wanting for their lack of reality and narrative naivety. Yousuf, a young Pakistani factory worker accounts for his dislike of Hindi movies as a way of simultaneously articulating his closer relationship to English culture:

People will be interested in Hindi movies but I am more English 'cos I don't like watching Hindi movies because I don't understand half of what they are saying. Like the Hindi movies, if you don't mind me saying, but it's like the same thing in every single film but with English movies it's like a different story. You've got four or five different types. With Hindi movies you don't have comedy or anything like that and if you do it's a bit weird.

The Afro-Caribbean focus-group discussions reveal a different set of relations again, highlighting the importance of American culture in mediating the relations between black and more mainstream forms of Britishness. In presenting the relations between black and British culture as being overdetermined by the relations between ‘black’ and American culture, they suggest that Afro-Caribbeans find it more difficult to maintain community-specific cultural practices than do British Indians or Pakistanis. Patricia, born in the West Indies but now a British citizen, initiates a set of exchanges in which this issue is given a thorough airing:

Patricia: I think that for the Asians and the Jews ... they've kind of circled, like a domain, they have a specific thing that they adhere to, a certain way of living you know.

Terence: Well ... I mean OK you're talking here again about mostly people who have had their cultures more or less in the past ... for historical reasons

or whatever, they've been able to preserve these areas of their culture and you know, so can express it. We on the other hand, we have been through what we've been through and ours has come out like a, I don't know.

Michael: But it's a melting pot, it's ...

Terence: It's very different ... but we should at least be informing our children that there is some kind of a seed there that you know that is black culture, and you try and get them to pick up the threads of it instead of, you know, just chopping and changing or just picking up all kinds of American – because what we get now is mostly American black culture.

The most extended exchanges in the group of middle-class Afro-Caribbeans have a different focus, one centred less on the question of a distinctive black culture than on cultural practices with different valences for distinction either within the wider society or within the Afro-Caribbean community. The group divides over the virtues of 'mainstream' versus art cinema, while newspaper reading also proves contentious, the majority of the group's members dismissing the tabloid press as either trivial gossip or, in Lizzie's assessment of *The Daily Mail*, as 'racist dishwasher rubbish'. As we saw in Chapter 6, the one member of the group who does confess to liking tabloids is given a hard time by the rest for reading below his class and level of education, and for implicitly condoning their racist scaremongering. Discussions about taste, however, are most animated in relation to the practice of sucking or 'kissing' one's teeth, an Afro-Caribbean equivalent of 'giving the finger' that is interpreted as, variously, a sassy subcultural practice or, in class terms, as common. What is perhaps most notable about this group, however, are the respects in which, when it comes to talking about favourite film actors and directors, the examples chosen are massively tilted toward America: Martin Scorsese, Michael Douglas, Jim Carey, Meryl Streep, Robin Williams, Arnold Schwarzenegger, John Travolta and Gwyneth Paltrow.

The white British members of the sample we interviewed also exhibit a complex cultural geography, in no way confined to British referents whose values often emerged from a sense of their place relative to either European or American culture. Traditionally the associations of 'high culture' in Britain have tended to be European. This is true whether one focuses on the aristocratic culture of the Grand Tour or that of the modernist *avant-garde*. American culture, by contrast, has traditionally been strongly associated with the emergence of popular culture in the UK, especially in the areas of music and film, where Hollywood has been of major importance since the inter-war years. Many of our white British sample showed evidence of the cultural pull of these two locations, although often with an evident reversal of these traditional evaluations. When European sources are identified, they are often disparaged as evidence of a tired or lost cultural world: recall, for example, Maria's disparaging assessment of Sartre as talking up his backside.

One advantage of our focus group discussion is that participants introduced their own references in the course of conversation, rather than simply responding

to our prompts. These more ‘naturally occurring’ data give a powerful way of assessing the geographical range that these groups used. Considering this evidence, across the entire social range of the white focus groups, the absence of European⁴ referents in literature and film is remarkable. There were 53 references to specific books: only one was to a named European author, the autobiography of the German Formula One champion, Michael Schumacher, itself revealing since he is not first and foremost a writer. Of the 91 references to a named film, only one was to a European film (the French *Delicatessen*). Of the 16 references to film directors, only two were to Europeans (the Spaniard, Pedro Almodovar, and the Dane, Lars von Trier). Of 65 references to actors, only one was to a figure of continental European origin. This was the Austrian–American Arnold Schwarzenegger, whose film career is closely associated with – in fact entirely located in – Hollywood. Even in the world of music, despite some liking for classical music, only seven out of the 167 references are to continental Europeans (Mozart 3; Bach 2; Beethoven; and Vivaldi). Whereas contemporary British and American musicians generate intense feelings and excitement, this does not extend to continental Europe.

The appeal of American culture, often linked to idioms of escape and freedom from the daily workaday world, is a striking contrast. Irene, a retired factory worker from the Midlands, describes her preference for American drama series of the 1980s in terms of their distance from her own life experience:

Well I think we used to like *Dallas* and *The Colbys* and all that kind of thing, because it was glamorous and you know it took you out of the world, what it is today with all the beautiful clothes and you know the richness of all the oil fields and what was he called, oh god what was he called, what was he called?
Bobby Ewing.

Amy, a doctoral student from the lesbian focus group, similarly juxtaposes her hatred of the British *Bad Girls* to her preference for the American writer, Ann Tyler, and her parabolic representations of contemporary life.

Ann Tyler, she’s an American author and she’s written masses of novels and they’re all about, kind of, they are usually about slightly quirky odd people. My favourite one is about a woman who’s on holiday with her family and she just walks out of the beach and she just keeps walking and creates this whole life from the family, can’t even remember what she looks like ...

It is in these and similar terms that many white members of the main sample express their preference for American culture, which – to recall our discussion in Chapter 8 of the popularity of quality American television drama series among young managers and professionals – serves, for some, as means of demonstrating a capacity for discernment without appearing to be elitist.

It is clear, then, that the members of our two samples are immersed in varied ways in complex and often contradictory relations between different national, regional

and transnational cultures. We examine the nature of these cultural geographies in greater detail by turning next to our survey evidence.

13.3 The culture-scapes of England, America and Europe

It is possible to assess more systematically how different social groups refer to cultural referents from different regions of the globe by using the named cultural items included in our survey. Looking at the knowledge of and liking for particular artists, writers, film makers and musicians from different parts of the world by members of different ethnic groups, provides insight into how groups vary in their cultural imaginaries. We would ideally have liked to explore relations to cultural items with a mainly Indian, Pakistani and Afro-Caribbean provenance alongside items that, while varying in their regional provenance, are predominantly white in their associations. However, the practicalities of questionnaire design ruled this option out so that we can only report on how the ethnic groups in our study are differentially placed in relation to cultural items with predominantly white English, American and European associations.

The questionnaire contained the following geographic spread of named items: fourteen television programmes, three books, one musical work and three artists from England; seven television programmes, two directors, five musical works and one artist from the US; two film directors, two artists, two musicians and one writer from continental Europe. We organised these into three regional scales as shown below.

English scale

Television items: *Spooks*, *Midsomer Murders*, *Bad Girls*, *Absolutely Fabulous*, *University Challenge*, *Panorama*, *A Touch of Frost*, *Two Pints of Lager and a Packet of Crisps*, *EastEnders*, *The Bill*, *Coronation Street*, *The Grand National*, *Election Night*, the *Queen's Christmas Broadcast*

Literary items: J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*; Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*; Catherine Cookson, *The Solace of Sin*

Musical items: Oasis, *Wonderwall*

Visual art items: L. S. Lowry, J. M. W. Turner, Tracy Emin

American scale

Television items: *South Park*, *Sex and the City*, *The Simpsons*, *Friends*, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, *The West Wing*, *Six Feet Under*

Cinema items: Alfred Hitchcock, Stephen Spielberg

Literary items: John Grisham, *The Firm*; Maya Angelou, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*

Musical items: Eminem, *Stan*; Philip Glass, *Einstein on the Beach*; Miles Davis, *Kind of Blue*; Britney Spears, *Oops I Did It Again*; Frank Sinatra, *Chicago*

Visual art items: Andy Warhol

European scale

Cinema items: Pedro Almodovar, Ingmar Bergman

Literary items: Gustave Flaubert, *Madame Bovary*

Musical items: Vivaldi, *Four Seasons*; Mahler, *Symphony No. 5*

Visual art items: Vincent van Gogh, Pablo Picasso

Some readers will wonder whether we have constructed a British or an English scale. In fact, all the named items in the first scale, with the exception of J. K. Rowling, who is a Scot by residence, if not by birth, are English. Most of the items are also strongly English in their connotations (*Coronation Street*, *The Bill*, *Midsomer Murders*, *Pride and Prejudice*, etc.) with none having specifically Irish, Scottish or Welsh associations. This is, then, accurately described as an English scale, and we note that due to limited sample sizes in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, as well as the lack of resources needed to vary questions across the four nations of the UK, our assessment of national cultural diversity within the UK is limited. In addition, these regional scales are not exact equivalents: the preponderance of television items in the English and American scales, and their absence from the European scale, which consists almost entirely of traditional ‘high-culture’ items, is notable. Also, the television programmes included in the first American scale are mainly high-quality American imports with a strong connection with Channel 4 or BBC2, in contrast to the broader spread of programmes included in the English scale. It will therefore be important, in interpreting the different ways in which different groups relate to these three ‘culture-scapes’, to take account of the fact that, besides differing in their regional provenance, the cultural items loaded into these different scales vary with regard to their degree of legitimacy.

Consider, in Table 13.1, the different relations to the three regional scales of the white groups within the main sample and the three minority ethnic groups within our ethnic boost sample. The figures summarise the mean levels of the members of the two samples who both know of and to some degree like the items in each of the English, American and European scales. For purposes of comparisons across these two samples, those who identified themselves as non-white from the main sample are excluded, so that, subject to this qualification, comparison of the two sample totals gives an overall picture of black/white ratios.

The table shows, predictably, that the white English know and like more of the English items than (in order) the white Celts, the ‘white others’, Afro-Caribbeans, Indians and Pakistanis. The gradient here is marked: the score for the white English is nearly double that for the Pakistanis. Ethnic differentiation is much less marked in appreciation for American items, with only the Pakistanis falling well below the score for the other ethnic groups. For the European scale, we see some diversity amongst the white groups, but the black ethnic minorities, and especially Pakistanis, have very low scores compared to all the white groups, and especially those in the ‘white other’ category.

Table 13.1 Ethnicity and the regional scales, number of items known and liked

	<i>English scale</i>	<i>American scale</i>	<i>European scale</i>	<i>n</i>
<i>Main sample (MS)</i>				
White English	10.3	8.8	4.7	1117
White Celtic	9.6	8.4	4.0	291
White other	8.0	9.7	5.7	46
Total	10.1	8.7	4.6	1453
<i>Ratios</i>				
Celtic/English	0.9	1.0	0.9	
Other/English	0.8	1.1	1.2	
<i>Ethnic boost (EB)</i>				
Afro–Caribbean	6.1	8.9	3.0	45
Indian	5.7	7.1	2.7	94
Pakistani	5.4	5.8	2.0	96
Other	7.9	10.3	4.6	30
Total	5.9	7.3	2.7	265
<i>Ratios</i>				
EB/MS totals	0.6	0.8	0.6	
Afro/White English	0.6	1.0	0.6	
Indian/White English	0.6	0.8	0.6	
Pakistani/White English	0.5	0.7	0.4	

Given that the European scale is heavily weighted toward traditional high-culture items, it is likely that class contributes to the differences between the white groups here: the white Celtic group contains a significantly larger working-class contingent at over 50 per cent compared to 44 per cent for the white English and, on the whole, has lower levels of educational attainment. A similar combination of factors needs to be taken into account in relation to the ‘white other’ group, as its stronger affiliation to items on the European scale partly reflects the composition of this group as mainly of European origin (54 per cent, plus a further 27 per cent of second-generation white families who were born in Britain) compared to 11 per cent from North America and 11 per cent from a range of ex-British colonies (Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Hong Kong). However, the high levels of education of this group are also relevant here: it has the lowest percentage of members with no educational qualifications and the highest, at 31 per cent compared to a sample mean of 23 per cent, of those with university qualifications.

Clearly and consistently, when considering the relations between the totals for the ethnic boost and main samples, the degree of affiliation of the minority ethnic groups to the English and European scales is less than that of the white English. By contrast, the minority ethnic groups show a much higher level of affiliation to American culture. This is particularly true of the Afro–Caribbeans who are second only to the ‘white others’ in relation to the American scale. It is notable that Pakistanis exhibit the lowest rates of affiliation to all three scales, and particularly

to the European scale. This might reflect, as we saw in the previous section, the stronger role of religion and of community-specific traditions that we found among some of the Pakistani members of our focus groups and household interviews.⁵ But class and education are also relevant. Pakistani households are the poorest in our survey (25 per cent below £15,000 annual income compared to a 15 per cent mean for the main sample), just as Pakistani respondents are the most concentrated in routine occupations, even though their levels of participation in higher education match those of the main sample.⁶

As we have seen in earlier chapters, gender significantly divides tastes and practices in many of our fields. It is not, however, very consequential in distinguishing regional cultural affiliations. Women score more highly than men across both samples on the English and European scales, and men, again across both samples, score more highly on the American scale.⁷ However, none of these differences is large, and gender plays no appreciable role in differentiating aggregate black/white responses to the scales with men/women ratios here varying only within the range of 0.9 to 1.1.

The situation is different with regard to age (Table 13.2), which is clearly of major significance in structuring sensitivity to the three regional scales. This is true for both the main and the ethnic boost samples, although in different ways. In the main sample, older people are more disposed towards European and English referents and less attracted to American ones, whilst younger people are more orientated towards American items and show little interest in European ones. In the ethnic boost sample, by contrast, there is a clear tendency for degree of affiliation with the American and European cultural items to be higher among the younger age groups.⁸ By contrast, there is much less variation by age for the English scale, and indeed the highest score comes from the over 75s.

Consideration of the effects of country of origin in the ethnic boost sample paints a complementary picture. Table 13.3 shows that those born in the UK have higher rates of affiliation to each of the scales, but more so to the American and, most especially, the European scales than to the English scale. This is as might be

Table 13.2 Age and the regional scales, number of items known and liked

<i>Age</i>	<i>English scale</i>		<i>American scale</i>		<i>European scale</i>		<i>n*</i>	
	<i>Main</i>	<i>Boost</i>	<i>Main</i>	<i>Boost</i>	<i>Main</i>	<i>Boost</i>	<i>Main</i>	<i>Boost</i>
18–24	7.6	6.0	10.8	8.2	3.7	3.1	123	68
25–34	8.9	5.4	10.4	7.9	4.4	2.5	263	75
35–44	10.0	6.4	9.0	7.5	4.6	3.0	297	54
45–54	10.8	6.0	9.0	6.8	4.7	2.4	250	34
55–64	11.7	5.3	8.2	4.6	5.3	1.9	230	17
65–74	10.7	6.8	6.6	3.4	4.5	1.5	167	12
75+	10.2	7.8	5.5	3.4	4.1	3.0	123	4
Total	10.1	5.9	8.7	7.3	4.6	2.7	1451	264

* Totals exclude age unknowns.

Table 13.3 Respondents' country of origin and the regional scales (ethnic boost sample only), number of items known and liked

	<i>English scale</i>	<i>American scale</i>	<i>European scale</i>	<i>n</i>
Born in UK	6.5	9.5	3.7	113
Born overseas (OS)	5.5	5.6	1.9	149
Total	5.9	7.3	2.7	262
UK/OS born ratio	1.2	1.7	1.9	

Table 13.4 Class and the regional scales

<i>Class</i>	<i>English scale</i>		<i>American scale</i>		<i>European scale</i>		<i>n*</i>	
	<i>Main</i>	<i>Boost</i>	<i>Main</i>	<i>Boost</i>	<i>Main</i>	<i>Boost</i>	<i>Main</i>	<i>Boost</i>
Professional-executive	11.2	7.0	9.8	9.6	6.3	4.5	338	47
Intermediate	10.6	6.7	8.8	8.8	4.8	3.3	433	61
Working	9.3	5.6	8.0	6.3	3.5	2.0	657	130
Total	10.1	5.9	8.7	7.3	4.6	2.7	1428	238
Working class/prof.-exec. ratios	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.4		

Source: * Totals exclude those unassigned to class positions.

expected given that 89 per cent of those who are born in the UK are aged between 18 and 39, whilst the equivalent figure for those born overseas – who amount to 57 per cent of the sample – is 42 per cent.

We look finally at class differences in relation to the three scales (Table 13.4). Class effects are registered much more sharply within the ethnic boost sample relative to the main sample in relation to both the American and European scales than to the English scale where, indeed, the working class/professional-executive class ratios are the same. The 0.4 working class/professional-executive class ratio in the ethnic boost sample for the European scale suggests that a familiarity with European culture differentiates classes more sharply among minority ethnic groups than does familiarity with either English or American culture. It also suggests that familiarity with European culture differentiates classes more sharply among black minority groups than it does among the white British. As we have already seen, the same is true for members of the 'white other' group, suggesting that relations to both American and European culture are more important for processes of class formation among all minority ethnic groups – black and white – than are relations to the English scale.

13.4 Conclusion

This chapter has shown the complex interplay between national, regional and global cultural connections, and ethnicity in the UK. We have made four

main points. First, there is evidence in support of Hage's contention that 'practical nationality' can be conceived as a form of 'national cultural capital' that is invested in a sense of belonging. Those who possess this form of cultural capital, which derives from familiarity with a particular nationalised repertoire of cultural forms and practices, are able to see themselves as a part of the symbolic and governing space of the nation (Hage, 1998: 50–55). Majid Raja's lack of such capital exemplifies this point, but all ethnic and migrant minorities, even those who are well educated and are endowed with cultural resources, position themselves ambiguously with respect to many of the English cultural referents that we studied.

Second, cultural capital is not solely organised within bounded national fields. The dominant approach within cultural sociology is concerned to compare cultural practices in different nations, as if they are largely self-contained entities. By contrast, we have shown how different kinds of trans-national identifications are themselves key components of cultural capital. In the UK, earlier concerns to establish cultural power involved knowing and appreciating European genres but, among younger age groups, American cultural forms are increasingly important. Cultural capital is not organised purely within a national frame of reference, but deploys a complex, though contested, cultural geography.

Third, culture is associated with different ethnic and national groups in complex ways, underscoring the need to differentiate between types of ethnic group. In relation to the European, British and American scales, Pakistani ethnic minorities are the most at odds with mainstream white culture. Afro-Caribbeans show as much familiarity with American culture as the white population, but much less with European. The differential scores of the whites and ethnic minorities are narrower for the American than for the European and English scales, an interesting comment on the power of the American cultural imaginary.

Fourth, age, gender and class divisions operate within different minorities. Many of our ethnic minority interviewees, especially the highly-educated younger ones, display considerable sophistication and reflexivity in their handling of cultural categories and genres. Their experiences as minority group members have, to some degree, forced them to reflect on processes of categorization and classification, thus developing cultural capacities that allow them to navigate between cultural referents with considerable subtlety. This is a distinctive form of cosmopolitan cultural capital that may be associated with the proven ability of many ethnic minorities to perform well in the educational system (Modood, 2004).

14 Conclusion

Our investigation has demonstrated, beyond question, the existence of systematic patterns of cultural taste and practice. These patterns exist within, and across fields. Some fields are more highly structured than others, music being the most marked by oppositions of taste between established and emergent forms. Sport, film and television, by contrast, have rather weaker patterns, though in the latter, for instance, liking for news, documentaries and nature programmes cluster together, as do soap operas and costume dramas. Tastes are not singular. While probably no individual has exactly the same tastes as any other, preferences can be grouped. People who go regularly to the opera are also likely to find Impressionist painting appealing and to nominate French restaurants as their favourite type. Those who do not like watching sport on TV tend to like modern art and romance fiction. There are, then, homologies across fields that are indicative of shared styles among groups of people within the population.

Our cultural maps identified cultural patterns without regard to the attributes of the people who held these different cultural portfolios. Unsurprisingly, from a sociological point of view, characteristics like class, education, gender and age are associated with different locations in the space of lifestyles. Our multiple correspondence analysis demonstrates, and other statistical techniques confirm, that cultural preferences track lines of social cleavage. This does not, however, assume a highly unified and uniform shape. The most powerful dimension of cultural difference – the first axis – reflects what Bourdieu called ‘total volume of capital’, holdings of cultural and economic assets, which form the basis of the social class structure. However, education and occupation differentiate some fields more than others, for example, in the reading of books, in visual art and in music. However, tastes in music are even more strongly differentiated by age, while preferences among television programmes and regimes of body management vary more in relation to gender. While Bourdieu effectively reduced patterns of cultural taste in France to differences of class habitus, treating gender and age as secondary, such a strategy would not properly apply in Britain in 2003.

The biggest stake arising out of the voluminous debate with Bourdieu concerns the role of class. While we find the notion of class habitus unhelpful, we agree with him that cultural proclivities are closely associated with social class;

the three classes that we inductively generated from our cultural maps transcend particular occupational positions. This does not, however, produce exclusive, highly integrated and unified patterns of class behaviour; perhaps it is more useful to see classes as force fields, within the parameters of which individuals vary, though within limits. The testimony of individual interviewees (in Chapters 4 and 12 especially) suggests that nuanced personal differences oscillate around core class patterns.

We do need to emphasise that many aspects of cultural life are shared by people who inhabit diverse social positions. Some activities remain exclusive to the upper echelons of the middle class, some for reasons of wealth, others for reasons of cultivation. It is not accidental that, in general, participation in public cultural activities, rather than expressions of taste, mark the distinctiveness of the space of the professional–executive class. Yet many activities are common to all. The degree to which the classes overlap one another on our cultural maps means that some members of the working class share more or less exactly their tastes with some members of the professional–executive class. That does not, however, eliminate distinction.

Few activities are monopolised by the working class. Indeed, those which might have been a monopoly in the past – some forms of sport, spectatorship and gambling, tastes in popular music, membership of social clubs – have been encroached upon by a middle class fortified by a sense that ‘an openness to diversity’ is noble. Consequently, the culture of the working class is not distinctive. However, this does not entail its *exclusion* from cultural activity. The working class in Britain is, in general, not engaged with high culture; it neither likes nor is interested in the items and genres of legitimate culture. Most notably, its members do not go extensively to art galleries, museums, theatre, classical concerts and the like. They do not feel that they are excluded from legitimate culture. This is not to say that they do not feel aggrieved when thinking that other people may look down upon them because of their non-participation. Nevertheless, hostility is muted partly because we find little sense of overt cultural superiority or condescension on the part of the middle class.

We might understand the British situation in the following way. First, much of the middle class is not itself strongly attached to, conversant with, or engaged in the activities that mark legitimate culture. Second, since the working class are not marked by a distinctive set of cultural practices, there is no need for the middle classes to define their own culture in relation to it. Bourdieu’s middle class subjects perceived French working-class culture as vulgar, leading them to champion refinement and distinction. However, in a situation where there are not active contrasts to be drawn between different kinds of class-specific cultural engagement (for instance, ‘vulgar’ versus ‘cultured’), and where the middle classes populate, even dominate, the main channels of cultural engagement, then working-class culture tends to be defined as ‘lack’ of culture. The working class, which constitutes still almost half the population, is thus marginalised, its supposed deficit rendering it invisible (see, more generally, Savage 2000; Skeggs 2004). We resist this tendency to treat the working class as invisible, not by counterposing an

alternative working-class culture, for which we find no evidence, but by noting the hesitations and detachment in the accounts given by working class people. This process of recovery helps recognise the political significance of cultural engagement, even though there is little overt contestation and class resentment.

Although disproportionately the province of the educated, professional-executive class, facility with legitimate culture is not acquired by all the members of that class; not by a long chalk. Legitimate culture can nevertheless still be identified. It is central to the elite, where it oils the wheels of social connections. Being comfortable with opera and theatre confers social advantage in this quarter at least. The same is probably true, to a lesser degree of intensity, for others in the professional-executive class. But in one particular sense this legitimate culture has primarily local value. True, here, it is local to the powerful, and the implication is that absorption in, or familiarity with, aspects of legitimate culture is instrumental in achieving integration into such circles. Cultural capital is being exchanged for social capital and, ultimately, on occasion, for economic advantage. But its value is not so obviously recognised elsewhere. The working class does not emphasise the unfairness of a cultural hierarchy, and presumably, therefore, does not believe that command of legitimate culture is a source of privilege to which it is denied access. So, whereas in France in the 1960s probably the whole population recognised the advantage gained from familiarity with a particular heritage in the arts, consecrated in a scholastic canon and challenged only from within by *avant-garde* tendencies, the situation appears different in the contemporary UK.

Bourdieu argued that command of legitimate culture supplied advantage, maintained over generations, to a dominant class. That emphasis undoubtedly played down the part of age, gender and ethnicity in the process of unequal cultural reproduction. That these divisions are deeply implicated in the cultural life of the UK is one of the main contributions of our analysis, their intersection with class being at the core of our account. Had we had a larger sample and a larger range of indicators, we would probably have been able to demonstrate that ethnicity was more important than actually proved possible. Our sense is that the profit attributed to command of legitimate culture probably owes more than is usually appreciated to familiarity with national cultural capital; and that distinction is achieved for the higher echelons among the white British population from establishing a certain distance from national culture. Multi-culturalism, cosmopolitanism and an appreciation of specifically American cultural forms appear distinctive to a younger and more ethnically diverse professional-executive class today.

Although it still matters, legitimate culture has rather less importance in the UK than Bourdieusian interpretations would expect. As we have suggested, Bourdieu's account of the system of cultural domination in France hung first and foremost on the combination of command of legitimate culture and the operation of a Kantian disposition of disinterestedness. While both can be found to some extent in the UK at the beginning of the twenty-first century, they do not play a central role in cultural order, the latter especially.

In this regard, cultural organisation in Britain exhibits considerable diversity such that it is difficult to identify a unifying logic. The construction and analysis

of our space of lifestyles reveals cultural fractures along multiple lines – degree of engagement, opposing preferences for emergent and established cultural forms, and inward and outward orientations towards cultural consumption. Examination of specific fields indicates considerable diversity. Oppositions revolve around degree of intensity of commitment to different genres in the field of music, the viewing of original works of art in galleries rather than absorption of visual art from other sources, and the reading of books rather than magazines. The dynamic of the music field, where subcultural orientations to contemporary commercial forms generate enthusiasm and innovation, is very different from that of visual art, where an attachment to works associated with legitimate culture continues to distinguish among social groups. Nevertheless, distinct orientations towards art works also cut across the division between legitimate and popular culture; the figures of enthusiastic amateur, relaxed consumer and defensive individual indicate competing dispositions that owe little to the spirit of Kantian disinterestedness. In other domains, like television and body management, neither legitimacy nor disinterestedness play a significant part in cultural differentiation. The situation in Britain is considerably removed from that in the France described by Bourdieu.

Bourdieu was able to identify a positive list of cultural practices that constituted cultural capital that reliably delivered profit. Such a list would be very difficult to compile for the UK now. The older generation will probably go to its grave with the highbrow/middlebrow alignment based around an accommodation to legitimate culture, but the structure of the cultural order has changed. However, arguably it is less the selection of cultural content (as with legitimate cultural items) and more the orientation towards cultural consumption that delineates class divisions in the UK. From its cultural engagements the working class seeks fun, a particular type of escape, entertainment and sociability, showing apparent indifference to the role of culture in marking a social hierarchy.

Insofar as there is a dominant expression of cultural capital in Britain, it is perhaps the adoption of an omnivorous orientation. This manifestation of cultural capital is flexible and convertible between different fields. It allows the accumulation of further referents, marking a considered orientation to emerging and contemporary cultural forms rather than solely to a traditional canon. It is contrasted with ‘fixed’ or ‘static’ tastes, which can be portrayed as narrow and restricted, and, by implication, those of the working class.

The prevalence of cultural omnivorousness as a form of distinction cannot be accepted in any simple form, however. First, hardly anyone in the UK now denies that openness is a virtue. Second, on closer inspection it would seem that there are several types of omnivorousness, those with the characteristics specified in the original essays of Peterson as ‘omnivores’ being a small minority (see Warde *et al.*, 2008). Third, it is not always genuinely a taste for everything, for there are limits to its range. It is predominantly Anglophone, British and American cultural forms that are browsed. Within cultural fields key cultural divides are rarely crossed. For example, in the area of music, many people range across rock, heavy metal, electronic and world music, but rarely stray into classical

music (and vice versa). There are particular stigmatised tastes (for country and western music, for example) which are avoided by nearly all except (working-class) enthusiasts.

Nevertheless, the ethos of omnivorousness is a source of security to the middle classes. It has a liberal and egalitarian veneer, suggesting a denial of a cultural hierarchy of value. It sanctions access to hedonistic and popular activities, which give pleasure previously denied. It accords with the consumerist imperative to try everything in search of new gratifications. It implies that command of legitimate culture, not a great strength of the British middle classes, is a dispensable virtue. While there is still an affinity between class position and command of legitimate culture, the latter is embedded in versatile repertoires. Its existence is predicated upon changes in the nature of cultural production, also upon the fact that there are fewer penalties for preferring popular culture or ignoring legitimate culture. Consequently, the composition of the cultural capital of the most privileged sections of the population today is different from that of the France, and probably also the Britain, of the 1960s.

The cultural omnivore thesis depended on there being identifiable cultural boundaries. Where are today's cultural boundaries? The evidence from our focus groups and interviews gives hints. Working-class men balk at the suggestion of going to opera or classical concerts. Professionals find it hard to admit to reading the *News of the World*, watching a lot of television, liking reality TV, 'merely' being entertained, or enjoying country and western music. Men almost universally reject soap operas, women are disparaging of those who do not make an effort to dress up on important occasions; the young dislike classical music and the elderly are dismissive of recent popular music. People are drawing boundaries, only some of which are class boundaries. But these boundaries are weak and not heavily policed. They supply comparatively minor rules of conduct and the penalty for their infringement is no longer great. Almost no one publicly defends traditional standards, or legitimate culture, for its own sake.

As concepts like 'neo-tribe' (Maffesoli, 1988) and 'enclave cultures' (Bellah *et al.*, 1985) suggest, some of the strongest and most visible boundaries enclose relatively small minority subcultural forms of practice. Some scholars would propose that there is no longer any other important type of distinction. Yet the demonstration that national cultural capital has efficacy in ordering the social world should cause pause for thought. Commercial production and ever more diverse channels of cultural communication provide great opportunity for cultural specialisation. Enthusiasms flourish. Affection for subgenres of popular music enlivens conversation and creates collective affiliations. The concept of subcultural capital captures the scenario nicely. People, in a small area of the social space or on a narrow stage, derive satisfaction, reputation and collective solidarity from their special, or specialist, 'social worlds' (Gronow, 2004). However, for very few are these the whole of their cultural experience; most people are occasional visitors, rather than insiders, in such communities. The exchange-value of subcultural capital is usually very low, except where occasionally an enthusiasm, for what Stebbins (1992) called 'serious

leisure', provides an avenue leading from amateur to professional occupational status.

Another way to appreciate this point is to recognise that deploying cultural capital is almost always situation-specific. Conversion requires a public performance in front of others who will accord value, and subsequently personal reputation, on the basis of the display. For Bourdieu, the positive indicators of holding appropriate forms of cultural capital were command of legitimate culture and mastery of the Kantian aesthetic. In Britain today it would be hard to construct the recipe for successful display of refinement or competence in such a positive manner. The rules for expressing cultivated persona operate more as negatives. Do not appear snobbish. Do not fail to modulate performances in the light of specific audiences. Neither watch too much, nor too little, television. Do not stay at home too often. Do not neglect opportunities for passing aesthetic judgments. Do not neglect to discipline the body. Do not specialise too much or become enthralled by subcultural capital. Do not assume that the same cultural forms will retain their value for ever. The performance of distinction is complex theatre.

Britain exhibits a mosaic of cultural divisions. Commitment to diverse cultural practices, and the splintering within practices, creates a highly fractured cultural order. Diversity appears even more complex because practices operate at the intersections of social cleavages. Nevertheless, the combination of MCA and interviews indicates very effectively that class, age, gender and ethnicity give social shape to the many subcultural activities that provide the first point of attention for ordinary people going about their daily cultural lives.

Distinction *can* be obtained from familiarity with particular symbolically significant items, through possession and use of a relatively few of them, including some of those included on our cultural map. These are sources of cultural capital – objective and embodied. However, they work mostly through, first, their capacity to contribute to the achievement of occupational positions, especially in the culture industries, and second, their contribution to sustaining social capital, the networks of friends and associates from whom assistance is gained and partners acquired.

Our cultural map has served us well as a guide to the broad patterns of the distribution of taste in the UK. It identifies probabilities that some tastes, across fields, cluster together and, when the social bases of clustering is examined, allows us to see how social divisions relate to cultural practices. It would, however, have been less useful had we not also had access to other sources of original data. The focus groups allow some access to the way in which people think and talk in situations where they confront other people more or less like themselves. Especially because some of these focus groups are comprised of friends and acquaintances, it is reasonable to think that the transcripts record ways in which groups of personal associates do normally talk about issues of culture. From this we get some confidence for our claims that cultural hostility is relatively limited in Britain today. Professionals could have said to each other that they disliked working-class people because of their tastes, but they didn't. In fact, the British seem rarely to use aesthetic preferences as indicators of personal worth. This reluctance may be the corollary of the widespread uncertainty about standards;

a level of confidence in one's own judgment, not readily apparent in most of the population, is required in order to condemn others. Consequently, most people merely register, without ranking, the fact that social groups have patterned and distinctive tastes. Perhaps even more valuable was the capacity to use interviews with people who had responded to the survey. This both indicates that, by and large, individuals have the tastes and practices implied by their location on the maps and also gives essential information about their own perceptions and reasoning about the nature and sources of their preferences. This produces unprecedentedly rich material, each method providing a means of deepening understanding and adding distinctive insight.

From these qualitative sources comes a much better understanding of the orientations that people bring to their cultural practice. Most obviously the debate about cultural omnivorousness has been hampered by its dependence on survey data. Having interrogated people who, according to normal quantitative measures, qualify as omnivores, we do not find a unified and homogeneous cultural syndrome. A disposition towards openness can take several forms, with only some likely to convey high levels of cultural capital.

Where then does that leave cultural capital? Perhaps the main reason to continue to deal with Bourdieu is that his setting of the metaphorical concepts of capital within a comprehensive social theory of practice, *habitus* and field provided a unique and potentially hugely powerful social scientific apparatus for a sociological account of culture. However, as it stood at the time of his death, despite his attempts in the previous decade to systematise concepts which earlier he only defended in an *ad hoc* way, the conceptual armoury he bequeathed remains insufficient. A good many critics have recommended the abandonment of the concept of cultural capital and the theoretical programme, which proposes to investigate the relationship between types of capital. Others, with strong sympathies for the Bourdieusian position, have tried to reassert the applicability of the original conception, but with increasingly less success. We do neither. Rather we suggest that a re-formulation and re-specification of the concept will permit its potential to be better realised.

We have suggested that the conceptual formulation of Pierre Bourdieu was imprecise, but also flawed in two major ways. First, it required a strong interpretation of the pervasive role of a class *habitus*. The postulate that *habitus* operates in an integrated way to stabilise simultaneously both social and cultural hierarchy is neither theoretically nor empirically plausible. Second, the account rested on a view that a specific orientation (disinterestedness) and content (legitimate culture) served to reproduce class inequalities. Neither that orientation nor that content are the only forms through which cultural competences are consolidated into assets productive of advantage or privilege. Disinterestedness is not very prevalent. Neither is it reasonable to *assume* the existence of a clearly distinct realm of legitimate culture in which the components comprising it can be easily identified, or to imagine that it offers everywhere a substantial profit.

Acknowledging a broader range of component elements to cultural capital enhances the impression that Bourdieu overemphasised the nexus of legitimate culture, *habitus* and the Kantian aesthetic. Thence, we can begin to rescue the

concept, or one like it. First, it is attractive as a shorthand for the accumulation of cultural resources that can be deployed for personal advantage. Second, it is versatile, with a capacity to capture features of educational institutions, the culture industries and the system of stratification in Western societies. Third, it has proved highly successful in the past in organising facts about unequal participation by different sections of the population in cultural activities that have been accorded differential value. Fourth, it has an integral connection in its theoretical corpus of origin with three other concepts of capital – economic, social and symbolic – which together can be combined to offer a complex account of the production and reproduction of social inequality. So, while far from satisfactory as it currently stands, it is worth persevering to hone it more precisely.

Bourdieu had a tendency to invent in an *ad hoc* way notions of capital that lay outside his most concise and perhaps best considered attempt to specify the contents of cultural capital (Bourdieu (1997[1986])). Bourdieu's threefold distinction between embodied, objectified and institutionalised cultural capital is valuable but restrictive, and needs to be supplemented. Attention to additional forms of cultural capital seems warranted. Our account found additional uses for technical, affective, national and subcultural forms of cultural capital.

First, some particular cultural practices generate cultural resources, or skills, which is to say that they allow individuals to accumulate potentials and capacities. The analogy is with research on human capital, with the convertibility of skills and cultural capacities – ranging from literacy, numeracy, to more complex sets of skills and expertise convertible to economic measures through market transactions. Their economic convertibility is central. In his later work, Bourdieu (2005) coined the term 'technical capital' to describe marketable skills, perhaps admitting that his earlier outright opposition to Becker's arguments about human capital were somewhat misplaced.

Second, emotional cultural capital accumulates in relation to acts of sympathy and solidarity based often upon local, domestic or private interactions. It is well recognised that businesses increasingly look for employees in some positions to have emotional rather than technical skills, and within the world of family and community, people earn reputations for being kind, supportive and competent in their handling of personal relationships. Often inappropriately attributed to women as a natural endowment, such capacities are a means to personal, familial and social reproduction.

Third, national cultural capital operates on the assumption of the existence of traditions, in both high and popular culture, which generate and justify a sense of belonging and an occupancy of a governing national position. National cultural capital is primarily defined by its content, though what exactly is appropriate will vary from group to group, as will the extent to which a nationalist orientation is required in addition. It is a form with limited exchange value because it is not rare; by definition it is shared by most of the majority ethnic population of a country. However, the proportion declines as migration accelerates and its claims diminish in the face of global communication. In operation, to lack it acts as a handicap, rather more than its possession supplying a route to profit and preferment.

Finally, we recognise practices that Thornton (1995) defined as producing subcultural capital. Familiarity and competence with specialised realms of cultural production, within demarcated fields of specialised expertise, allows the gathering of experience, reputation and skill. Thornton observed that, on the dance scene, not everyone can be an outstanding dancer. Within any cultural field, some people command reputation as excellent and therefore enjoy distinct relational advantages, though ones depending on the viability of the field of expertise itself. Cultivation promises esteem and reputation within relatively small social enclaves – of enthusiasts or lifestyle groups. In short, it accumulates within very specific enclaves and situations; in Thornton's example, those engaged in the dance scene gain kudos amongst themselves, but this has no value after the weekend when they return to work. This version is analogous to Bourdieu's own account of the cultural *avant-garde*, who are seen as experts within their field, but whose expertise is field specific.

A more elaborate and better specified analysis of capitals, or assets, is required to account for the diverse ways that cultural practice delivers profits to individuals and groups. It will always be necessary, in each particular historical context, to specify the forms, content and strength of cultural assets, and to estimate the rates at which they can be exchanged for other types of asset. Though it is hard to imagine a rigorous method to determine precisely the relationships in the value of assets at different points in time, it seems possible to sketch with a broad brush a likely history of exchange rates. At present it is relatively difficult in the UK to cash in a command of high culture directly for greater social status or esteem. Since the 1980s, when the earlier denigration of people whose primary goal in life was to accumulate economic capital – who sought 'merely' to be rich – was turned around, the returns to legitimate culture have much diminished. Stores of cultural capital fluctuate in value in the face of social and cultural change, suggesting that the key task of a future research agenda would be to examine historically returns to cultural capital in different times and places.

Today, however, few people make a positive stand for the superiority of particular cultural forms, and few draw parallels between cultural and social worth. Nevertheless, means still exist by which selective participation and expressed preferences act as assets that may either be mobilised to impress others or otherwise converted to economic advantage. Possession of cultural capital is still a route to personal advancement and distinction, with the most profitable portfolio combining educational qualifications, a degree of eclecticism, some subcultural commitment and appropriate forms of embodiment. Culture is not a matter of indifference for the powerful, and for some sections of the middle class it remains critical. Although cultural capital achieves its effects in a different and differentiated manner, clothed in an inclusive ethic, it still helps secure the reproduction of the privilege of the professional–executive class. 'Good taste' probably matters less directly than before, and less than it did in France in the 1960s, but it continues to create, mark and consolidate social divisions.

Methodological appendices

APPENDIX 1: FOCUS GROUPS

The first phase of the study involved 25 focus groups, conducted over a six-month period, during which the survey instrument was being designed. The groups were held in six locations across the United Kingdom (UK), selected to include a variety of national, rural, urban, provincial and metropolitan settings. The make-up of the groups was designed to encompass a variety of ages (with groups initially planned with people under thirty, people from 30–60 and the over-60s) social and occupational classes (initially broadly defined as working- and middle-class, but including the unemployed and benefit claimants), sexual identities (including groups with lesbians and gay men) and ethnicities (including groups with Afro–Caribbean, Indian and Pakistani men and women). To ensure a full representation of women, additional groups were held with working-class and professional women. A group was also organised amongst workers and professionals within the arts and cultural industries. The initial aim was to recruit groups of between six and eight members for a one and a half hour discussion. In practice, the number of recruits in each group ranged from two to eight. In total, the focus-group phase recruited 143 participants, 74 women and 69 men.

The groups were convened by trained researchers located across the UK,¹ who organised them using a variety of methods of identification and access negotiation. These included approaching community organisations (a community centre for the Pakistani groups, a church for the working-class pensioners, a health education and support group for the gay men), approaching businesses or other workplaces (for the black working-class group), drawing on networks provided by professional organisations (the groups held with business elites and managers) and approaching people in pubs or libraries (the skilled, semi-skilled and managers groups in Swansea and the black working-class group). Some of these approaches proved more successful than others, with participants from lower socio-economic groups being particularly difficult to identify and/or recruit. Explanations for this ranged from a lack of experience of research or a fear of the unknown (reported in relation to the Indian working-class group) to an outright suspicion of what was interpreted as inquiring officialdom (reported by groups in Swansea and Belfast). Most convenors, then, in addition to these approaches,

drew on personal and professional networks, and employed various techniques of snowballing and the use of key gate-keepers to generate ad-hoc samples. Groups were variously conducted in the function rooms of pubs, libraries or community centres, or within regional teaching centres administered by the Open University.

Seven key topics were identified for discussion (uses of domestic media; tastes for music; visits to the cinema/theatre; tastes for reading; visits to museums/arts galleries or events; sport; cuisine, including preferred styles of domestic entertainment) and two of these were allocated for discussion by each group. Each group was also asked to consider its engagement with leisure activities in and around the home, to reflect on the categories of good and bad taste, and to identify potential barriers to cultural participation. In introducing these topics, moderators were encouraged to avoid the imposition of particular hierarchies of cultural value to allow for the discussion of the broadest possible definition of cultural activities. The focus groups were recorded on audio-tape, transcribed and analysed via Nudi*st software. Transcripts were indexed thematically and specific information, relating to preferred authors, artists, television shows, etc., was identified. Focus group convenors provided brief participant notes on the recruitment process and the discussion itself, as well as brief biographical data for each participant.

One of the methodological strengths of focus groups is to re-order relationships of power between researchers and researched. Sue Wilkinson (2004) outlines the ability of group members to claim or re-claim the agenda of the discussion, and to refuse or resist narratives imposed upon them by researchers. In a study such as this, recognition of these types of re-ordering was important and focus groups were at their most revealing in relation to groups whose cultural lives are not often articulated by other methods of social inquiry. This openness, though, was in some tension with the pragmatic concerns with the generation of data that would be helpful in organising our survey instrument (see Silva and Wright, [2005]), for a discussion of these tensions. Focus groups, as a technology for the production of social research, have a particular history and trajectory that it is important to acknowledge, (see Johnson, 1996). Although varieties of the focus-group interview would have been known at the time of Bourdieu's *Distinction*, the rise of the focus group into one of the more established tools of social research occurred late in the twentieth century, notably in marketing, product development and public opinion or policy research. Bloor *et al.* suggest that explanations for the current popularity of the focus group include that they are 'social events', 'time limited' and 'demand no technical skills of the group members' (2001: 13). Whilst these first two elements were important for us, the third is less clear in this investigation, where some groups and their members were more at ease with and experienced in forms of group discussion than others. Thomas Osborne and Nikolas Rose, in their discussion of the creation of public opinion by the techniques of researchers, outline the importance of a 'political education in the expression of opinion' (Osborne and Rose, 1999: 387) for opinion poll participants. In a similar way, the various competencies, confusions and diversions evident within our focus-group sample

suggests the constitutive role of cultural capital in the successful operation of this method.

Table A1.1 Focus group participants

<i>Focus Group</i>		<i>Allocated topics</i>	<i>Group participants No. (Male–Female)</i>
1	Rural service workers	Domestic media/music	5 (0–5)
2	Gay men	Sport/food	8 (8–0)
3	Middle-class retired	Reading/museums	7 (1–6)
4	Working-class retired	Domestic media/reading	8 (2–6)
5	Lesbians	Music/reading	7 (0–7)
6	Black middle class	Cinema/reading	5 (3–2)
7	Landowners and managers	Reading/museums	6 (4–2)
8	Skilled manual workers	Cinema/reading	7 (5–2)
9	Low-paid women	Domestic media/reading	7 (0–7)
10	Pakistani middle class	Reading/museums	8 (8–0)
11	Pakistani working class	Cinema/museums	5 (4–1)
12	Supervisors	Music/food	7 (5–2)
13	18–30 year old	Music/cinema	7 (3–4)
14	Unskilled and semi-skilled	Museums/sport	7 (4–3)
15	Benefit claimants	Music/sport	7 (5–2)
16	Agricultural workers	Domestic media/sport	4 (4–0)
17	Black working class	Domestic media/music	3 (2–1)
18	Indian middle class	Sport/food	7 (3–4)
19	Indian working class	Domestic media/cinema	5 (1–4)
20	Cultural industries	Domestic media/cinema/museums	6 (2–4)
21	Self-employed	Sport/food	4 (1–3)
22	Professionals	Domestic media/cinema	3 (1–2)
23	Women professionals	Music/museums	5 (0–5)
24	Business elites	Music/reading	3 (1–2)
25	Managers	Cinema/sport	2 (2–0)

APPENDIX 2: THE SURVEY AND ITS ANALYSIS

The sample

The survey was administered between November 2003 and April 2004 by the National Centre for Social Research. The cross-sectional sample was a stratified, clustered, random sample designed to be representative of adults (aged 18+) living in private households in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. After selection of names of individual respondents, no substitution was allowed at any stage of the process selection of interviewees. The response rate on the original sample drawn was 53 per cent. Since this produced too few interviewees, a further sample was drawn, yielding a further 292 interviews. Because of the shorter fieldwork period available for this part of the sample, re-issues were not

possible and the response rate was 43 per cent. The final achieved sample size on the cross-sectional sample was 1564. An ethnic boost sample obtained 227 extra interviews with people belonging to one of the three most numerous minority ethnic groups in Britain, Indian, Pakistani or Afro-Caribbean.

The CAPI (Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing) questionnaire was piloted in October 2003, and reviewed and modified before fieldwork began. Interviews lasted 60 minutes on average.

The data from the main cross-sectional sample have been weighted to take account of the fact that not all the units covered in the survey had the same probability of selection. The weighting reflects the relative selection probabilities of the individual at the three main stages of selection: address, household and individual.

Questionnaire design

In preparing the questionnaire, we aimed to identify a range of items for each of several fields, including some which had been identified in earlier accounts as definitive elements of high and popular culture, some mainstream majority tastes and some specialised products associated with subcultures and the *avant-garde*. Items are necessarily highly selective and those chosen could always be otherwise. In choosing them, we drew on focus-group discussions (see Appendix 1) and the advice of a panel of a dozen sociologists and arts' professionals, who debated the meaning and likely appeal of potential items in order to obtain a coverage that was not biased towards particular social groups or interest constituencies. We also drew on previous survey questions and earlier studies to provide a broad spread of cultural products and practices that were symbolically significant and amenable to social interpretation. The survey also contained comprehensive data on respondents' occupation, economic and social capital, as well as their education, parental background and ethnicity. So far as we are aware, it is the most thorough survey of its type in the UK.

Analytic procedures

Multiple correspondence analysis: a distinctive technique

Our foremost technique for analysing survey responses is multiple correspondence analysis (MCA; see Greenacre and Blasius, 1994; Clausen, 1998) and, more precisely, specific MCA (Le Roux and Rouanet, 2004), a form of geometric data analysis (GDA). MCA was the analytic technique preferred by Bourdieu (1984, 1988, 1996) and is one which has often been applied by French sociologists to French society. However, it has met with limited favour in Britain. MCA involves patient attention to, and careful construction of, that which is to be explained – in our case, the distribution of cultural resources in the population. MCA proceeds differently from standard multivariate techniques that distinguish a-priori dependent variables, which might then be explained through different combinations of

independent variables. Instead it proceeds *inductively* from the individuals and variables, where variables are categorised and are composed of *modalities*. The geometric approach leads to two clouds of points, namely, the ‘cloud of modalities’ and the ‘cloud of individuals’, whose principal axes are then sought.

Questions must cover diffuse aspects of cultural taste and participation, so that it becomes an empirical matter to assess how far patterns can be detected amongst the many modalities. Should questions of a particular type dominate, then it is likely that the distribution of points in the resulting figures will be the artefact of this dominance. The items included in the MCA cover a wide diversity of cultural fields – music, reading, television, film, visual art, sport and eating out – and mix questions on participation and taste. This complexity is deliberate: the aim is to see whether, using GDA, there are common structuring properties operating across these multiple domains. The space we have constructed here is unusually large and rich, and allows us to assess in unprecedented detail the location of a wide number of cultural variables.

In our MCA, we retained 41 questions, 17 regarding participation and 24 on taste, generating 198 modalities (61 for participation and 137 for taste), of which 168 were used when defining the distance between individuals. Those excluded were rare modalities (frequencies less than 4 per cent) and ‘others’ or ‘don’t know’ modalities. For the questions and the frequency of responses for the sample, see Table A2.1, columns 1 and 2. Before proceeding with a multivariate analysis, we eliminated 35 individual cases, 32 who had failed to respond to four or more of the questions about taste in reading, and three who had replied to no more than one question on visual art. Hence the MCA refers to 1529 individuals.

Table A2.2 is a means of checking whether the variance is skewed towards particular kinds of field, in which case we would be worried about whether our ‘space of lifestyles’ is comprehensive. In fact we can be reasonably reassured. There are variations between eating out, at one extreme, which contributes the least (10 per cent) and music at the other. Even music, however, comprises less than 20 per cent of the variance. Rather more than two-thirds of the variance is attributable to measures of taste, a proportion which is in line with the proportion of modalities in our questionnaire covering the theme of taste.

By interpreting the Eigen values reported for each different axis, we can assess how many values are required to offer an adequate summary of the space of lifestyles that we have constructed. Table A2.3 indicates that our cultural map is organised along four axes, one of which accounts for around half the complete variance (modified cumulative rate of 48 per cent), the second of which accounts for nearly 23 per cent of the variance, the third of which for 7 per cent and the final one 4 per cent. The total cumulative modified weight of the first four axes is 82 per cent. Once we get to axis 5, little additional variance is explained, and we can therefore be confident that our four axes offer a powerful mapping of cultural taste and participation.

The actual contribution of each modality to each of the axes is indicated in Table A2.1, which indicates the exact questions incorporated into the MCA. Their weight in the analysis is shown, and their contribution to each of the four axes of

Table A2.1 Contributions of active categories

Label	Variable	Sample mean (%)	Relative weight (%)	Squared distance to origin	Axis 1	Axis 2	Axis 3	Axis 4
No. hours TV (an ordinary weekday)								
Tvd < 1h	Less than 2 hours	15	0.370	5.59052	0.44	0.00	0.02	3.36
Tvd 2–5h	Between 2 and 5 hours	60	1.474	0.65476	0.30	0.02	0.00	0.48
Tvd > 5h	5 hours or more	24	0.590	3.13243	1.94	0.03	0.00	0.14
Total			2.434		2.69	0.05	0.02	3.99
No. hours TV (an ordinary weekend day)								
Tvw < 1h	Less than 2 hours	12	0.286	7.54190	0.17	0.01	0.00	4.63
Tvw 2–5h	Between 2 and 5 hours	54	1.314	0.85558	0.47	0.04	0.07	0.32
Tvw > 5h	5 hours or more	34	0.834	1.92352	1.21	0.11	0.13	0.33
Total			2.434		1.85	0.16	0.20	5.28
Type TV programme like best								
Tv + news	News/current affairs	18	0.428	4.70522	0.24	1.07	0.47	0.39
Tv + comedy	Comedy/sitcoms	11	0.279	7.73714	0.01	0.91	0.03	0.05
Tv + police	Police/detective	7	0.169	13.42450	0.06	0.09	0.01	0.04
Tv + Nature	Nature/history documentaries	12	0.298	7.17647	0.07	0.51	1.32	0.02
Tv + sport	Sport	12	0.295	7.26486	0.01	1.26	4.40	0.57
Tv + films	Films	9	0.223	9.92143	0.02	0.37	0.06	0.40
Tv + drama	Drama	9	0.228	9.69231	0.21	0.25	1.14	0.11
Tv + soap	Soap operas	17	0.418	4.83588	0.91	0.01	4.81	0.61
Total			2.339		1.52	4.46	12.24	2.18
Type TV programme like least								
Tv – news	News/current affairs	4	0.102	0.00000	0.16	0.12	1.00	0.12
Tv – game	Quizzes/game shows	6	0.142	16.17980	0.00	0.00	0.18	0.05
Tv – nature	Nature/history documentaries	4	0.104	0.00000	0.17	0.15	1.12	0.04
Tv – sport	Sport	16	0.388	5.29218	0.10	0.02	3.66	0.03
Tv – art	Arts programmes	8	0.203	11.03940	0.19	0.95	0.00	0.61
Tv – reality	Reality TV	26	0.643	2.79404	0.49	0.54	0.73	0.14

Continued

Table A2.1 Cont'd

<i>Label</i>	<i>Variable</i>	<i>Sample mean (%)</i>	<i>Relative weight (%)</i>	<i>Squared distance to origin</i>	<i>Axis 1</i>	<i>Axis 2</i>	<i>Axis 3</i>	<i>Axis 4</i>
Tv – soap	Soap operas	17	0.416	4.85824	0.11	0.03	2.86	0.04
Tv – cookery	Cookery/gardening/house decorating	6	0.136	0.00000	0.11	0.22	0.29	0.00
Total			2.133		1.33	2.03	9.84	1.04
How often go to the cinema?								
Cin 2	At least monthly	17	0.416	4.85824	0.99	1.31	0.33	1.64
Cin 1	Several times a year	31	0.743	2.28112	0.96	0.36	0.34	0.36
Cin 0	Once a year/Never	Never	1.279	0.90648	1.73	1.24	0.59	0.08
Total			2.439		3.69	2.91	1.26	2.08
Type of films like the best								
F + action	Action/adventure/thriller	29	0.702	2.47500	0.01	0.66	0.69	0.56
F + comedy	Comedy	18	0.443	4.50000	0.00	0.44	0.82	0.01
F + drama	Costume drama/literary adaptation	10	0.246	8.92857	0.74	2.68	0.05	0.01
F + documentary	Documentary	8	0.187	12.06840	0.02	0.50	0.33	0.52
F + horror	Horror	5	0.118	0.00000	0.02	0.83	0.26	0.80
F + musical	Musical	7	0.167	13.56190	0.13	1.00	0.31	0.27
F + romance	Romance	8	0.191	11.74170	0.10	0.00	4.25	0.26
F + fiction	Science fiction	7	0.179	12.65180	0.18	0.56	1.34	0.17
F + western	Westerns	5	0.123	0.00000	0.65	0.14	1.83	0.00
Total			2.356		1.85	6.79	9.88	2.60
Type of films like the least								
F – bollywood	Bollywood	12	0.300	7.13298	0.10	0.30	0.87	0.05
F – drama	Costume drama/literary adaptation	5	0.126	0.00000	0.00	0.53	0.39	0.04
F – horror	Horror	20	0.493	3.94822	0.02	0.82	0.55	0.07
F – musical	Musical	7	0.167	13.56190	0.00	1.10	1.27	0.15
F – romance	Romance	5	0.115	0.00000	0.04	0.10	2.34	0.06
F – fiction	Science fiction	14	0.333	6.31579	0.05	0.54	0.45	0.83
F – war	War	8	0.196	11.43090	0.01	0.01	1.60	0.60
F – western	Westerns	10	0.238	9.26175	0.03	0.01	0.61	0.13
Total			1.968		0.25	3.40	8.08	1.93

How often go to theatre?									
Theatre 2	At least monthly	26	0.627	2.89059	2.39	0.80	0.24	0.67	
Theatre 1	Several times a year	31	0.750	2.25319	0.54	0.13	0.07	3.32	
Theatre 0	Once a year/never	44	1.062	1.29580	3.27	0.14	0.02	0.82	
Total			2.439		6.20	1.08	0.33	4.80	
Number of books read in last year									
NoBk	None	19	0.461	4.29066	2.39	0.13	0.42	0.52	
Bk 1-6	1-6	42	1.015	1.40409	0.01	0.40	0.01	0.79	
Bk 7-24	7-24	21	0.522	3.67584	0.58	0.15	0.01	0.12	
Bk >24	25 or more	18	0.442	4.51986	0.36	0.82	0.15	0.06	
Total			2.439		3.34	1.50	0.60	1.49	
How much like who-dunnits?									
WhoDu+	Like	30	0.739	2.30238	0.08	0.02	0.01	0.17	
WhoDu=	Indifferent	40	0.970	1.51480	0.41	0.05	0.02	0.21	
WhoDu-	Dislike	28	0.686	2.55581	0.94	0.23	0.01	0.64	
Total			2.394		1.44	0.30	0.04	1.02	
How much like science fiction, fantasy and horror?									
Fiction+	Like	15	0.357	5.82589	0.28	1.88	0.74	0.24	
Fiction=	Indifferent	22	0.526	3.63333	0.24	1.07	0.10	0.04	
Fiction-	Dislike	63	1.531	0.59271	0.27	1.54	0.36	0.15	
Total			2.415		0.79	4.49	1.20	0.44	
How much like romances?									
Romance+	Like	21	0.518	3.70462	0.17	0.08	6.97	0.79	
Romance=	Indifferent	33	0.793	2.07646	0.47	0.15	0.82	0.17	
Romance-	Dislike	46	1.112	1.19369	0.08	0.27	6.56	0.87	
Total			2.423		0.72	0.50	14.34	1.83	
How much like biographies and autobiographies?									
Biog+	Like	39	0.956	1.55259	0.96	0.05	0.07	0.01	
Biog=	Indifferent	36	0.882	1.76492	0.12	0.04	0.00	0.58	
Biog-	Dislike	24	0.581	3.20055	2.64	0.00	0.11	1.00	
Total			2.418		3.71	0.09	0.18	1.59	

Continued

Table A2.1 Cont'd

Label	Variable	Sample mean (%)	Relative weight (%)	Squared distance to origin	Axis 1	Axis 2	Axis 3	Axis 4
How much like modern literature?								
ModLit+	Like	14	0.333	6.31579	1.49	0.12	0.11	1.54
ModLit=	Indifferent	40	0.970	1.51480	1.06	0.06	0.05	0.36
ModLit-	Dislike	44	1.067	1.28550	2.55	0.00	0.17	0.01
Total			2.370		5.09	0.18	0.33	1.91
How much like religious books?								
Relig+	Like	9	0.212	10.49620	0.00	0.50	0.14	1.16
Relig=	Indifferent	23	0.552	3.41908	0.43	0.23	0.14	0.59
Relig-	Dislike	68	1.659	0.47019	0.13	0.28	0.13	0.00
Total			2.423		0.56	1.01	0.41	1.75
How much like self-help books?								
SelfhelpBk+	Like	16	0.399	5.11600	0.25	0.01	0.75	0.05
SelfhelpBk=	Indifferent	32	0.770	2.16563	0.40	0.29	0.22	0.36
SelfhelpBk-	Dislike	51	1.241	0.96530	0.53	0.15	0.78	0.09
Total			2.410		1.18	0.44	1.76	0.49
How often go to rock concerts?								
RockConcert 2	Sometimes	10	0.233	9.47260	0.83	1.63	0.23	0.59
RockConcert 1	Once a year or less	21	0.512	3.76324	1.24	1.09	0.00	0.37
RockConcert 0	Never	70	1.694	0.43974	0.90	1.10	0.04	0.00
Total			2.439		2.97	3.82	0.28	0.96
How often go to opera?								
Opera 2	Sometimes	5	0.112	0.00000	0.73	1.40	0.00	1.76
Opera 1	Once a year or less	12	0.286	7.54190	1.67	0.40	0.30	0.03
Opera 0	Never	84	2.042	0.19453	0.47	0.26	0.04	0.14
Total			2.439		2.88	2.06	0.34	1.93

How often go to orchestral or choral concerts						
Orch 2	Sometimes	12	0.289	7.44751	1.31	2.89
Orch 1	Once a year or less	22	0.525	3.64742	1.73	0.15
Orch 0	Never	67	1.624	0.50197	1.51	0.89
Total			2.437		4.55	3.93
How often go to musicals?						
Musical 2	Sometimes	18	0.432	4.64207	0.87	0.68
Musical 1	Once a year or less	33	0.796	2.06413	1.15	0.00
Musical 0	Never	50	1.211	1.01449	2.04	0.26
Total			2.439		4.06	0.95
How often go to night clubs?						
NightC 2	Sometimes	22	0.534	3.56418	0.05	5.37
NightC 1	Once a year or less	13	0.324	6.53202	0.27	0.54
NightC 0	Never	65	1.581	0.54289	0.13	2.83
Total			2.439		0.45	8.74
How much like rock?						
Rock+	Like	26	0.640	2.81297	0.83	2.45
Rock=	Indifferent	31	0.759	2.21218	0.12	0.18
Rock-	Dislike	39	0.948	1.57407	0.87	2.32
Total			2.347		1.83	4.95
How much like modern jazz?						
Jazz+	Like	13	0.308	6.92228	0.27	0.01
Jazz=	Indifferent	39	0.943	1.58714	0.61	0.15
Jazz-	Dislike	48	1.169	1.08595	0.90	0.10
Total			2.420		1.78	0.26
How much like world music?						
World+	Like	12	0.295	7.26486	0.05	0.22
World=	Indifferent	35	0.841	1.90133	0.69	1.50
World-	Dislike	50	1.227	0.98830	0.45	1.36
Total			2.362		1.19	3.08

Continued

Table A2.1 Cont'd

<i>Label</i>	<i>Variable</i>	<i>Sample mean (%)</i>	<i>Relative weight (%)</i>	<i>Squared distance to origin</i>	<i>Axis 1</i>	<i>Axis 2</i>	<i>Axis 3</i>	<i>Axis 4</i>
How much like classical music, incl. opera								
ClassicM+	Like	31	0.748	2.26013	0.83	3.47	0.27	0.70
ClassicM=	Indifferent	37	0.911	1.67776	0.18	0.31	0.13	1.49
ClassicM-	Dislike	32	0.774	2.15258	1.80	1.50	0.82	0.22
Total			2.433		2.81	5.27	1.23	2.42
How much like country and western?								
CWmusic+	Like	26	0.640	2.81297	0.55	1.17	0.18	0.00
CWmusic=	Indifferent	39	0.943	1.58714	0.08	0.01	0.01	1.13
CWmusic-	Dislike	35	0.842	1.89583	0.13	1.08	0.08	1.16
Total			2.425		0.77	2.26	0.27	2.29
How much like heavy metal?								
HeavyMetal+	Like	11	0.255	8.55625	0.28	1.04	1.03	0.47
HeavyMetal=	Indifferent	19	0.469	4.20068	0.69	1.51	0.15	0.26
HeavyMetal-	Dislike	68	1.646	0.48159	0.33	1.00	0.38	0.00
Total			2.370		1.30	3.56	1.56	0.74
How much like urban, incl. hip hop and R&B								
Urban+	Like	18	0.437	4.58029	0.01	3.13	0.90	1.40
Urban=	Indifferent	32	0.788	2.09514	0.46	0.77	0.15	1.03
Urban-	Dislike	44	1.067	1.28550	0.19	2.60	0.81	0.01
Total			2.292		0.65	6.50	1.87	2.43
How often go to museums?								
Museum 2	Sometimes	24	0.581	3.20055	2.69	0.70	0.02	3.59
Museum 1	Once a year or less	39	0.957	1.54833	0.43	0.09	0.04	4.11
Museum 0	Never	37	0.901	1.70619	3.97	0.12	0.10	0.32
Total			2.439		7.09	0.92	0.16	8.01
How often go to stately homes or historic sites								
StatelyHomes 2	Sometimes	33	0.802	2.03976	2.05	1.01	0.01	0.45
StatelyHomes 1	Once a year or less	37	0.903	1.70141	0.05	0.17	0.31	2.91

Stately/Homes 0	Never	30	0.734	2.32391	3.04	0.35	0.26	1.42
Total			2.439		5.14	1.54	0.58	4.77
How often go to art galleries?								
ArtGallery 2	Sometimes	16	0.400	5.09163	2.41	0.75	0.07	5.89
ArtGallery 1	Once a year or less	29	0.699	2.49087	1.41	0.00	0.07	2.36
ArtGallery 0	Never	55	1.340	0.82024	2.91	0.21	0.11	0.05
Total			2.439		6.73	0.96	0.24	8.30
Number of paintings owned								
paintings 0	None	62	1.506	0.61970	0.74	0.18	0.15	0.03
paintings 1–3	Between 1–3	22	0.542	3.49706	0.30	0.01	0.05	0.76
paintings >3	Four or more	16	0.384	5.34440	1.12	0.48	0.25	0.48
Total			2.433		2.15	0.67	0.45	1.27
Type of art like the most?								
Art + performance	Performance	8	0.193	11.63640	0.05	0.09	0.34	0.00
Art + landscape	Landscape	48	1.163	1.09739	0.16	0.50	0.89	1.51
Art + renaissance	Renaissance	4	0.099	0.00000	0.35	0.21	0.19	0.74
Art + still life	Still life	5	0.118	0.00000	0.00	0.01	0.16	0.35
Art + portrait	Portrait	9	0.214	10.41040	0.04	0.21	1.15	0.03
Art + modern	Modern	8	0.203	11.03940	0.05	0.99	0.97	3.08
Art + impressionism	Impressionism	10	0.236	9.33108	1.40	0.02	0.01	0.25
Total			2.225		2.06	2.02	3.70	5.96
Type of art like the least?								
Art – performance	Performance	14	0.333	6.31579	0.31	0.02	0.04	0.30
Art – landscape	Landscape	6	0.136	0.00000	0.01	0.83	1.31	1.68
Art – renaissance	Renaissance	4	0.105	0.00000	0.00	0.06	0.65	0.05
Art – still life	Still life	10	0.238	9.26175	0.10	0.22	0.40	0.12
Art – portrait	Portrait	5	0.121	0.00000	0.11	0.11	0.08	0.00
Art – modern	Modern	40	0.967	1.52310	0.01	0.90	0.56	0.53
Art – impressionism	Impressionist	12	0.287	7.49444	0.03	0.01	0.01	1.42
Total			2.187		0.58	2.14	3.04	4.09

Continued

Table A2.1 Cont'd

<i>Label</i>	<i>Variable</i>	<i>Sample mean (%)</i>	<i>Relative weight (%)</i>	<i>Squared distance to origin</i>	<i>Axis 1</i>	<i>Axis 2</i>	<i>Axis 3</i>	<i>Axis 4</i>
How often go to the pub?								
Pub 2	Weekly or more	29	0.703	2.46712	0.02	1.59	1.05	0.45
Pub 1	Several times a year	45	1.105	1.20635	0.35	0.01	0.89	1.27
Pub 0	Once a year/never	26	0.630	2.87089	0.86	1.46	0.03	0.60
Total			2.439		1.23	3.05	1.97	2.33
How often go to somewhere to eat out?								
EatOut 2	Monthly or more	61	1.496	0.63006	0.63	0.35	0.32	0.04
EatOut 1	Several times a year	29	0.697	2.49886	0.18	0.25	0.04	0.88
EatOut 0	Once a year/never	10	0.246	8.92857	1.57	0.38	1.10	1.18
Total			2.439		2.39	0.98	1.46	2.10
Place to eat out like most								
Eat + FishChips	Cafe/fast food/fish and chips	10	0.247	8.86452	1.44	0.18	0.05	0.79
Eat + Italian	Italian restaurant/pizzeria	18	0.445	4.48029	0.41	0.08	0.14	0.02
Eat + Pub	Pub/wine bar/hotel	31	0.753	2.23941	0.28	0.40	0.40	1.34
Eat + Indian	Indian/Chinese/Thai restaurant		0.756	2.22574	0.09	1.27	0.53	0.08
Eat + French	French restaurant	8	0.182	12.41230	1.19	0.53	0.09	0.04
Total			2.383		3.41	2.45	1.20	2.28
Place to eat out like least								
Eat – FishChips	Cafe/fast food/fish and chips	47	1.136	1.14747	1.10	0.62	0.00	0.09
Eat – Italian	Italian restaurant/pizzeria	5	0.126	0.00000	0.09	0.00	0.01	0.00
Eat – Pub	Pub/wine bar/hotel	16	0.380	5.42437	0.86	0.21	0.01	0.15
Eat – Indian	Indian/Chinese/Thai restaurant	5	0.123	0.00000	0.12	0.57	0.10	0.26
Eat – French	French restaurant	22	0.534	3.56418	0.14	1.55	0.02	0.34
Total			2.299		2.31	2.96	0.14	0.85

Favourite sport to play								
Nosport	None	45	1.105	1.20635	1.54	0.41	0.00	0.00
Racquet	Tennis/squash/cricket	4	0.102	0.00000	0.37	0.26	0.12	0.04
Indoor	Swimming/aerobics/gymnastics	21	0.509	3.79310	0.38	0.22	2.54	0.00
Outdoor	Athletics/skiing	16	0.383	5.37083	0.32	0.45	0.00	0.22
Football	Soccer/rugby	5	0.128	0.00000	0.17	2.34	1.16	0.00
Club	Golf	5	0.120	0.00000	0.26	0.03	1.47	0.54
Total			2.347		3.03	3.71	5.29	0.81
Type of sport like to watch most								
S + carracing	Motor racing/speedway	9	0.207	10.76150	0.09	0.22	0.15	0.02
S + racquet	Tennis/cricket/ice hockey	14	0.329	6.42233	0.21	0.84	0.54	0.04
S + indoor	Swimming/gymnastics	8	0.196	11.43090	0.00	0.00	2.45	0.19
S + social	Darts/snooker/boxing/horse racing	17	0.412	4.92636	0.78	0.07	0.11	0.16
S + outdoor	Athletics/skiing	7	0.161	14.13860	0.06	0.09	0.64	0.02
S + football	Soccer/rugby	35	0.855	1.85261	0.06	0.84	2.51	0.05
Total			2.160		1.19	2.06	6.40	0.49
Type of sport like least								
S – carracing	Motor racing/speedway	11	0.273	7.94152	0.04	0.25	0.02	0.01
S – racquet	Tennis/cricket/ice hockey	14	0.330	6.38647	0.25	0.32	0.10	0.13
S – indoor	Swimming/gymnastics	6	0.134	0.00000	0.01	0.32	3.05	0.14
S – social	Darts/snooker/boxing/horse racing	45	1.093	1.23212	0.54	0.06	0.11	0.06
S – football	Soccer/rugby	12	0.282	7.63842	0.38	0.18	0.05	0.27
S – club	Golf	6	0.150	15.26600	0.00	0.64	1.32	0.29
Total			2.262		1.22	1.78	4.65	0.90

Note: Bold indicates modalities retained on each axis, ones which are greater than the mean contribution of all modalities.

Table A2.2 Contribution to total variance of the seven fields by participation and taste (percentages)

<i>Frequency by subfield</i>	<i>TV</i>	<i>Films</i>	<i>Reading</i>	<i>Music</i>	<i>Visual art</i>	<i>Eating out</i>	<i>Sport</i>	<i>Total</i>
Participation	3.2	1.6	4.0	7.9	6.3	3.2	4.0	30.2
Taste	11.2	12.1	11.2	11.2	9.7	6.4	8.1	69.8
Total	14.4	13.7	15.2	19.1	16.0	9.6	12.1	100.0

Table A2.3 Eigen values, rates of variance and cumulated Benzécri's modified rates*

<i>Rates and values by axes</i>	<i>Axis 1</i>	<i>Axis 2</i>	<i>Axis 3</i>	<i>Axis 4</i>	<i>Axis 5</i>	<i>Axis 6</i>
Eigen values	0.1641	0.1188	0.0746	0.0633	0.0503	0.0472
Variance rates	5.333	3.860	2.0416	2.056	1.634	1.533
Modified cumulated rates	48.2	70.8	77.6	82.0	—	—

*See Le Roux and Rouanet (2004: 200).

inertia subjected to analysis. The general rule for interpreting the axes is that we retain modalities whose contribution to the axis is greater than the mean contribution, that is, $100/166 = 0.6$ per cent.

In the space of modalities, we can superimpose socio-demographic variables as *supplementary elements*, which do not intervene either in the definition of distances between individuals or in the determination of axes, and whose coordinates can be visualised together with active modalities.

Having constructed and interpreted the active modalities, we can subsequently inspect the ordering of the space of lifestyles to determine where individual respondents are located within that space. We can also inspect 'the cloud of individuals'. The cloud of individuals has rarely been used before in Anglo-American sociology: our use of it here is a major innovation. The cloud of individuals encompasses all information provided by supplementary variables. Sub-clouds of individuals can also be generated in relation to each variable. For instance, each gender defines a sub-cloud of individuals. Each sub-cloud has a mean point, which can be put in correspondence with the modality in the cloud of modalities.

A *structuring factor* generates a partition of the cloud of individuals. If for every sub-cloud we plot its mean point, we get a derived cloud of mean points whose variance defines the *between-variance* of the partition; the average variance of the sub-clouds defines the *within-variance* of the partition. The coefficient eta-square (η^2) is equal to the between-variance divided by the total variance (between + within). Useful geometric summaries of sub-clouds in a plane are provided by *concentration ellipses*. The length of each half-axis of the concentration ellipse is twice the standard deviation of the sub-cloud along this direction. For a normally

shaped cloud, the concentration ellipse contains 86 per cent of the points of the cloud (Le Roux and Rouanet, 2004: 97–99). Concentration ellipses are used in Chapters 3, 10 and 12.

New developments in MCA mean that we can use our qualitative work to probe the patterns of association revealed in the survey. It was only after Bourdieu had written *Distinction* that it became possible to look at ‘clouds of individuals’ in MCA. We can present MCA diagrams of individuals, each uniquely located according to their responses as coordinated on any pair of axes. *Landmark individuals* can be pinpointed and their profiles described, which proved highly instructive when interpreting household interviews, especially in Chapters 4, 10 and 12. Thus we could identify individuals within particular zones in the space of lifestyles with whom we had subsequently conducted qualitative interviews in order to clarify their orientations and motivations.

Analysis of survey data

Finally, we also use other, more orthodox techniques. We employ principal components analysis and use both ordinary least squares (OLS) and logistic regression analysis to explore the association between social groups and cultural commitments. We create scales – of cosmopolitanism and of omnivorousness, for example – to compare our results with those of others. However, where possible, we report frequencies and cross-tabulations to describe the relations between cultural items and group properties. Throughout the study, we use many different techniques, choosing those most suitable to the description and explanation of particular aspects of the phenomena under scrutiny. While relevant statistical tests have been conducted, these have not always been reported in order not to clutter the text with technical detail.

APPENDIX 3: HOUSEHOLD INTERVIEWS

Interviews and observation notes

Our aims at this stage of the project were to explore the relationship between gender, the household and cultural capital in relation to three aspects.

- 1 The relationship between patterns of cultural participation, taste and knowledge, as revealed by responses in the survey, and the specific aspects of the individual profiles of economic, social and cultural assets.
- 2 The role of household dynamics in the accumulation and deployment of cultural capital: how relationships of partnering and parenting, significant family changes, cultural group ‘belonging’, and relationships with significant ‘other(s)’ affect cultural capital (its kind, amount and direction).
- 3 The dynamics of interdependencies: the importance of an individual’s different networks and significant connections to their judgement, taste and

participation in cultural activities, and how they affect, and are affected by, those with whom they live or are intimate.

To achieve these aims we selected households based on a theoretically defined sample to account for a distribution of households in terms of (1) cultural capital composition, (2) presence of dependent children, (3) spread of geographical location, and (4) five basic types of household (single-person, lone-parent, couple with dependent children, couple with no dependent children, gay/lesbian) subdivided by 'white' and 'ethnic' composition. In the selection of different regions, we were concerned to include the four UK countries sampled in the survey – England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland – as well as to tap into some of the diversity within England. Realistically, only a small sample was tenable for an intensive qualitative study. How could we differentiate sufficiently to account for our aims within such a heterogeneous surveyed population, and yet maintain sufficiently large groups to allow for patterns to be discerned? The qualitative sampling resulted in 44 household interviews (20 with men and 24 with women) in 30 households. These included a selection of 28 respondents from the survey, two from the focus groups and, where relevant, their partners. We produced 14 partnered interviewees.

Contact was first made by letter and then by telephone prior to the interview. Our first screening was a question in the survey questionnaire concerning consent to being re-contacted. In some cases, various negotiations preceded access and, although it was more complicated when partners were sought, the majority of our gate-keepers were women who generally obtained agreement from their male partners. The rate of refusals from individuals from minority ethnic groups was large (11 out of 19 approached) relative to the total of refusals (23 out of 49 approached). All but one of the interviews were carried out in the interviewees' homes.

Our interview schedule turned out to be more structured than envisaged at first. This is because, following the survey, we realised the importance of exploring particular forms of engagement within the cultural field, which required direct reference to the survey questionnaire. We focused on seven main themes: (1) housing; (2) kind of job/work; (3) cultural capital and leisure activities (television, films, books, music, eating out, sport or physical exercise, personal style of dress, and attitude statements); (4) involvement in household activities; (5) ideals of style and appearance, and desire for social position; (6) exploration of visual taste; and (7) engagement with a potentially embarrassing situation. Two interview schedule templates were employed because, while we possessed an SPSS profile of survey respondents, we had no information about the partner's cultural and leisure practices, or her/his attitude or opinions.³ We built into the interview template questions similar to those asked in the survey to enable us to compare similar sorts of data produced in the exchange with the respondent to the survey. This made the process of interviewing partners slightly longer than the one-hour average for survey respondents. We used this partners' template for participants from same-sex households who had participated in the focus group discussions for

the first phase of our investigation. Household observation and participation notes were made by interviewers. These provided a record of features of the location of the house, housing characteristics, garden, decoration details, collections, furniture, dress and comportment of the respondents, as well as rapport with the interviewer.

This phase of the investigation was carried out between September 2004 and March 2005. All the nine interviewers were trained and provided with the same set of materials.⁴ Qualitative interviews, even semi-structured ones, entail a personal conversation, where the rapport between interviewed and interviewer is significant for the content and quality of the material generated. The intention was to approach the interviews in a conversational style, which required familiarity of the interviewer with the issues covered. Usually a successful and relaxed conversational style ensued, although some individuals generated less ‘flowing’ conversation.

Intellectual integration of this vast array of information was achieved through intensive debriefings of each individual interviewer and the reflexive account by interviewers of each research encounter, coordinated by one of us. The transcription of the audio tapes prepared was for analysis with the use of Nud*ist–Nvivo software. A list of pseudonyms was created and cross-referenced with partners’ names.

The multiple method approach enables us to compare information on particular individuals. Discrepancies between the SPSS data and that revealed through the interviews were significant in some cases. These referred to various issues, from the profile of the household type, the identification of the individual respondent or of the partner, to cultural practices or attitude statements. In some cases, these appeared to result from erroneous coding of the survey questionnaire, in others to change of circumstances or opinions of the respondents. For numerous participants, a time-lag of more than one year had passed between the survey questionnaire and the interview. We have written about the theoretical and methodological implications of these issues (Silva, 2006; Silva and Wright, 2008), which are fully accounted for in our analyses.

Comparison of our achieved sample with *Social Trends* demographics show that our qualitative interviews included a larger number of households with dependent children, and an expanded proportion of minority ethnic group households, both of which were intentional. We also achieved an expanded proportion of those with high cultural capital and tapped into a younger population; these were consequences of the willingness of these types of individuals to participate in this follow-up phase of the study. The proportion of women who responded to the survey and agreed to be approached for interview was much larger than that of men. However, because women often enrolled male partners, the potential deficit of male interviewees was made good.

The design of this phase of our investigation had two principal benefits. First, by interviewing separately partners who lived together, we could explore the dynamics of individual and household cultural life to see how one person affects the cultural taste and participation of the other (see Silva, 2006). Second, we have

been able to achieve what Bourdieu calls a 'double vision', a simultaneous focus on biographical data and on social structural data.

APPENDIX 4: ELITE INTERVIEWS

It was clear to us during the preliminary analysis of our survey findings that our sample did not include individuals occupying pinnacle positions in the corporate sector, political life or the civil service. We, therefore, decided to use personal and institutional contacts to identify people falling into one or more of these categories. The method of recruiting members of the elite sample was thus entirely opportunistic. We interviewed 11 people identified in the 'cast of characters' by their pseudonyms. It is important to note that all of those who were retired still had active professional lives through consulting roles and/or memberships of various boards or councils on either a voluntary or a paid basis.

The interviews were conducted by members of the research team. The schedule for the interviews was derived from that for the household interviews with respondents' partners, and was designed to get a sense of the forms of cultural taste, knowledge and participation that the interviewees would have reported had they answered the survey questionnaire. However, we were also interested to find out how far these elites were involved in the organisation and administration of the arts, how far such activities were related to their professional lives, how far they had formed a part of their educational careers, and what role they played in their social networking activities. The interview schedule was therefore extended to cover these issues.

While indicating our willingness to interview the members of this sample at a place of their choosing, all but one chose their place of work or, if retired, a place with which they were professionally connected. Observation notes were completed after each interview and the interviews were coded, analysed and anonymised as per the household interviews. One of the persons interviewed did not wish to be recorded, so analysis is based on the notes of the interview. The same person specified that no mention should be made of the references he/she made during the interview to his/her spouse or children. This specification has been respected.

Cast of characters

Household interview participants

Survey respondents located on the cloud of individuals

Caroline Alcock is a 25-year-old recent arts graduate and lives in a newly purchased house near the centre of a South Wales city, with her partner and pet dog. Caroline works as a local government research officer.

Cherie Campbell, 48, is a freelance tour guide and heritage worker from a historic Northern city. She lives with her husband, **Ian**, 50, a chef and restaurateur, in a city-centre flat.

Maria Derrick, 35, is a language teacher. She lives in a city in Yorkshire with her partner, **Fruit Bat**, 26 who works as a laboratory technician. Maria and Fruit Bat met through on-line gaming.

Poppy Farrimond, 47, is a residential social worker who lives in a West Yorkshire town with a 16-year-old son and a rescued cat.

James Foot is a 38-year-old university arts lecturer. He lives in a detached property in a suburb of a South Wales' city with his wife **Susan Mirza**, a 38-year-old hospital consultant, and their two young daughters.

Rachel Griffiths is a 26-year-old housing officer from a city in the North West of England. She lives with her 6-year-old son in a council house, which she plans to buy.

Jenny Hammett is a trained librarian. Aged 47, she currently works part-time as a creative writing tutor and writer. She lives with her research scientist husband, Dougie, 50, and three of their four daughters (the fourth is away at university) in a modern suburban semi in West Scotland.

Sally-Ann Lewis is 75 and lives alone in the home she built with her deceased husband, a local GP, in a town in central Northern Ireland. Sally-Ann trained as a nurse, but dedicated most of her working life to supporting her husband's practice and raising their three children.

Hilda Magee is a 33-year-old part-time shop assistant from a town west of Belfast. She lives with her husband and two teenage sons on the housing estate where she herself was brought up.

Rita Mckay is a 33-year-old secondary school teacher. She lives with her husband **Ali**, 31, an agricultural supplies salesman, their 2-year-old daughter and new-born son in a cottage close to the village in Southern Scotland where Rita was brought up.

Molly McNab is 51 and lives in a modern bungalow, built by herself and her recently deceased husband, in the borders region of Northern Ireland. A trained hairdresser, she has spent most of her adult life looking after her six children. Three teenage daughters still share the family home.

Cecilia O'Connor is 56 and lives with her teenage son, 26-year-old daughter and grandson in a semi-detached council house on the South Wales' estate, which is also home to her sister and extended family. Cecilia is recently widowed and no longer works. She is supported by sickness and disability benefits.

Stafford Rathbone came to Britain from the Caribbean in the early 1960s. He is 62 and works as an assembler and welder in a factory in a large Midlands city. He lives alone in a Housing Association flat in a quiet suburb.

Nameeta Raza is 54 and lives with her husband, **Majid**, 68, in a house, converted from a retail property or restaurant, on a busy main road in a Northern town. Her husband, a retired shopkeeper, was interviewed in her place. They share their home with their grown-up children.

Vasudev Rehman, 62, is a widower living in a suburb of a West Midlands city. A Sikh, Vasudev came to England from India in the mid-1960s. He owns and manages a metal-polishing business.

Ruth Richards is 67 and lives alone in a flat in a housing scheme on the edge of a Scottish city. Having formerly worked in the hotel trade, Ruth has spent most of her adult life as a housewife and mother to her 11 children, the youngest of whom lives in a nearby flat.

Robert Scroggie is a retired 67-year-old widower from South-West Scotland. He lives with his eldest daughter, 29, in a former council house, having worked as a builder's mate, a pig farmer and in a distillery.

Jim Shaw, 64, lives with his wife **Jane**, 65, close to the Scottish village in which Jim was born. Jim was a building worker, promoted to a consultant in the building industry, and the couple built their house – a bungalow – themselves. Jane used to work as a post-office counter assistant but retired due to ill-health.

Joe Smith is 30 and works as an electrician and site manager. He lives with his 29-year-old wife **Edie**, who works as a reconciliations clerk, and their baby son in a newly bought house in the village in South Eastern England where Joe was born.

Margaret Staples, 30, lives in rural Northern Ireland with her husband **Frank**, 35, and their three young children. They live in a self-designed and built bungalow located on the farm that Frank has inherited. Margaret is giving up her work in a care home to join Frank in building the family business.

Seren Star is a 55-year-old social worker, living in a suburb of a South Wales city. Divorced with a grown-up son, she lives with her pet spaniel.

Janet Taggart is a residential probation worker. She is 42 and married to **Gerry**, a 43-year-old police officer. They live in a large terraced house on the edge of a North Western town with one grown-up son. Another son has left home to study.

Survey respondents from minority ethnic boost sample

Shanaz Ahmed, 42, came to England from Pakistan in 1972. A full-time mother, she lives with her husband **Ferhan** and five children, in a Yorkshire city. Having previously lived and worked in West Germany, Ferhan now works as a driving instructor.

Naomi Bryant is a 33-year-old woman of Afro–Caribbean descent living in South London with her husband, **Tony**, and two sons – a teenager from a previous relationship and a 4 year-old. Naomi is a full-time mum, Tony works as an assistant manager in a carpet warehouse.

Sandra Edwards is a 33-year-old Afro–Caribbean woman, living with her two young sons in a council-owned flat in South London. Sandra is currently supported by benefits but hopes to return to her previous work as a nursery play-worker.

Surbhitra Gopal, 53, came to the United Kingdom (UK) from India 35 years ago. A former newsagent, she now works as a part-time dinner-lady in a local school. Her husband, **Nimesh**, works as a catering supervisor for the local council. They live in a corner terrace in the centre of an East Midlands city.

Elleray Lancaster is a 40-year-old black-British man from the East Midlands, living in a newly built estate on the edge of a major city. Now retired, Elleray works as a bar manager at a local hotel. His wife **Helen**, 42, works part-time for a large supermarket chain. They have two children.

Karim Rashid is a 31-year-old health and safety consultant from West Yorkshire. Born in Pakistan, he moved to the UK in the early 1970s. He lives with his wife and two young children in a modern terraced house.

Gay households from focus groups

Teri Lowell works as a researcher. She lives in a terraced house in South London with her teenage son and 8-year-old daughter.

Ronald Wright, 38, works for a law firm in the East Midlands. He lives in a prosperous estate on the edge of an East Midlands city with his partner, **Euan Thomas**, a professional working in the heritage industry.

Elite interviewees

David Beavan – CEO of a large multinational corporation.

Ralph Cohen – retired senior academic.

Jane Godfrey – financial director of a large investment company.

Beverley Harris – CEO of a medium-sized financial advisory company.

Caroline Janes – national trade unionist and politician.

Timothy Lancaster – retired senior civil servant.

Colin Miliband – retired senior civic servant.

Cynthia Simpson – politician, chair of a national policy commission.

Alistair Smethurst – owner and director of an inherited country-house estate.

Keith Tomlinson – director of family-owned retail chain.

Alan Whittaker – retired financial director of an international banking company.

Notes

1 Culture after *Distinction*

- 1 The original correspondence analyses reported in *Actes de la Recherche* are much easier to understand. They contained keys to labels which were not translated with the English edition, and used ‘overlays’ to make it easier to interpret the relationship between variables.
- 2 The only other study that has engaged with *Distinction* by conducting original fieldwork modelled on Bourdieu’s is Bennett, Emmison and Frow (1998). While we have drawn on this in our own approach, our use of multi-correspondence analysis has made possible a set of methodological engagements with Bourdieu’s work that these authors did not address.
- 3 For a series of engagements with Bourdieu’s work from different traditions in cultural studies, see the special issue ‘Bourdieu and cultural studies’ of *Cultural Studies*, 17(3–4), 2003.
- 4 Staff Callewaert (2006) makes a start to the need for an assessment of the relations between Foucault and Bourdieu, although his analysis suffers from too evident a partisanship for Bourdieu.

2 Researching cultural capital

- 1 Lazarsfeld had been involved in an earlier dispute with the traditions of European social theory when he and Adorno crossed swords in the context of their collaborations in research programmes for the Office of Radio Research (see Jay, 1973: 219–224). Bourdieu, however, distinguished his position from that of Adorno whom he characterised, somewhat harshly, as an ‘arid theoretician who refuses to sully his hands with empirical trivia’ (Bourdieu, 1984: 511).
- 2 This affiliation between Bourdieu’s sociology and the mathematics of geometric data analysis remains strong today, as is evident by the respect in which Bourdieu is held by many mathematicians. For Brigitte LeRoux and Henri Rouanet, for example, ‘the work of Bourdieu is exemplary of the “elective affinities” between the spatial conception of social space and GDA representation’ (LeRoux and Rouanet, 2005: 15). See more generally on the need to recognise the relationship between Bourdieu’s work and MCA, Weninger (2005).
- 3 The link between Bourdieu’s sociology and the extended case-study methods and ‘situational’ anthropology associated with the Manchester School of anthropology, which in turn was associated with Lewin’s field theorists, has been made in a very interesting essay by Burawoy (2000).
- 4 It is this fundamental similarity which should not be forgotten, given that so much attention has been centred on the opposition between these two academics in French social sciences.

- 5 There are some specific exceptions, but these do not easily constitute a tradition: Vester *et al.*'s (2004) studies of habitus in Germany, and Bennett *et al.*'s (2001) studies of Australia being the most important.
- 6 Bourdieu himself never clarifies exactly how he sees the overlap between physical and social space. His remarks are under-developed, rarely amounting to more than asides, and notoriously inconsistent. See Savage, Bagnall and Longhurst (2005) for one elaboration and discussion.
- 7 Such is the nature of Deleuze's work that it is difficult to find a single textual source which outlines his thinking here. Our reading has mainly been informed by Deleuze and Guattari (1987).
- 8 The respects in which Bourdieu's relationalism is a 'grounded relationalism' is made clear in his critique of the 'ungrounded relationalism' that characterises the Russian Formalists' account of the relational dynamics of literary systems. See Bourdieu (1996: 138–139, 181, 196, 200, 205).
- 9 See Bennett (2007) for an application of this perspective to the relations between culture and the social.
- 10 Our concern here is with the general principles informing our approach. More detailed discussions of these matters are contained in Chapter 3 and the methodological appendices.
- 11 It was not, however, unprecedented in more informal research traditions. Jonathan Rose (2001) has chronicled the often quite astonishingly detailed questions about musical and literary tastes and knowledge that were developed in association with the British labour and adult education movements in the inter-war years.
- 12 We do not, however, consider these questions in this study; their analysis is planned for a further stage of our work.

3 Mapping British cultural taste and participation

- 1 The preparation of the MCA graphs in this chapter, their conception and execution, was the work of Brigitte LeRoux. We are very grateful to her for giving us the benefit of her expertise in geometric data analysis. See further Le Roux *et al* (2008).
- 2 In this chapter, and elsewhere in the book, we use the term cultural life to encompass any aspect of taste, participation and knowledge. Much of our analysis is concerned to distinguish the relative importance of these three separate dimensions of 'cultural life' and readers should note that we attach no significant theoretical meaning to the term itself.
- 3 Although technically these are properly described as different domains or subfields of the cultural field, we shall follow custom here and refer to these as fields.
- 4 During the course of our work we have conducted numerous forms of 'orthodox' multi-variate analysis, some of which are reported in *Cultural Trends* (issue 15 [2/3]) and others are still being produced. This has proved valuable in numerous ways, and in general, has produced results which are consistent with the MCA analyses we report here.
- 5 Because these asked for responses on a Likert scale of 1–7 we have simplified these, so that a rating of 1–2 is seen as 'like', 3–5 as indifferent and 6–7 as dislike.
- 6 Where a given response does not obtain 5 per cent of the sample, it is either left out or recoded into a more comprehensive category.
- 7 See Appendix 2.
- 8 The statistical procedure lying behind it is a calculation of the within and between variance for social categories on each axis.
- 9 Eta squared is a measure of the contribution of a variable to variance on an axis. On axis 1: $\eta^2 = 0.39$ for education and 0.26 for social class.
- 10 With the sample partitioned into seven age categories, the η^2 value for the partition was 0.50. On this axis no educational or class variable had an η^2 value greater than .10.

11 $\eta^2 = 0.43$.

12 $\eta^2 = 0.05$.

4 Individuals in cultural maps

- 1 In Figure 12, in *Distinction*, Bourdieu reports on the location of groups of individuals within the space of lifestyles, but only through drawing ellipses around the mean points of the class fractions. These ellipses, which we also use in Chapter 3, 10, and 12, contain around 86 per cent of the members of different class fractions and hence allow readers to assess the extent to which members of particular class groups are internally dispersed. However, it does not locate any given individual uniquely in the space (see Bourdieu, 1984: 262).
- 2 There are, of course, statistical methods for dealing with this issue, for instance in the form of structural equation modelling, but we show here the value and quite different effect, of using qualitative interviews for this purpose.
- 3 In Chapter 11 we consider in detail axis 4 in relation to the middle class, and in Chapter 12 we explore axis 3 in relation to our discussion about gender and cultural capital.
- 4 A total of 44 individuals were interviewed. Individuals from the ethnic boost sample and partners of survey respondents are not included in Figure 4.1. For details of the household phase of study, see Technical Report (Silva, 2005) and Appendix 3. Some of the interviews with partners are included in this analysis and we assumed that the distance between couples within the space of lifestyles predicated by the MCA would be minimal in most cases. See the discussion about 'elective affinities' between fields and partners in Silva (2006).
- 5 Although we have an interview with Majid Raza, it was his wife who was included in the survey and whose position is plotted in Figure 4.1.
- 6 Her survey responses to these questions are that she attends occasionally, rather than never, which is one reason why she was placed on the right-hand side of axis 1. This information was 'corrected' with the interview (see Silva, 2006).

5 Tensions of the musical field

- 1 We used Schwarz's BIC statistic to assess the number of clusters required. The cut-off point was to accept all the improvements in fit up to less than 5 per cent over the first difference obtained in BIC terms, that is, solutions 1 (one cluster) and 2 (two clusters). We end up with a solution of eight clusters. Including cluster 9 would have improved our solution in less than 4 per cent (3.4) in BIC terms.

8 Contrasting dynamics of distinction

- 1 For details of the correlation analyses on which these findings are based, see Bennett (2006).
- 2 There is now a clear market for texts, aimed at student readers, that fall half-way between course readers designed for teaching purposes and culturally knowing consumption manuals for fans of such quality US television imports as *Sex and the City*, *Six Feet Under* and *The Sopranos*. See Akass and McCabe (2004) for an example.
- 3 Nor does he do so anywhere else. His later book on television (Bourdieu, 1998a) has been severely criticised, although many have found the more general precepts of his field theory productive for analysing relations of power within the media field and the relations between the media and other fields (Couldry, 2003; Benson and Neveu, 2005).
- 4 For fuller discussion of this trait among the members of our elite sample, see Warde and Bennett (2008).
- 5 Pseudonym for a Midlands-based 'art cinema'.
- 6 See Silva and Wright (2005) for a fuller discussion of the misunderstanding of labels in our research.

- 7 A large range of terms has been developed in the fields of audience and reception studies to describe and account for the inter-textual mediations that 'filter' the relations between texts and readers so that the text that is encountered is always a culturally mediated text rather than 'the text itself'. For a discussion of the concept of reading formations that we rely on here, see Bennett (1982) and Bennett and Woollacott (1987).
- 8 For a fuller discussion of the media practices of the members of the ethnic boost sample – and, indeed, for those of the main sample – see Bennett *et al.* (2006).
- 9 Horror movies were the least liked genre for 20 per cent of the sample with science fiction, at 13 per cent, a quite distant second in the unpopularity stakes.

9 Cultural capital and the body

- 1 We grouped the answers. Classification, rather rough and ready, of both participation in and watching sports derived from a preliminary principal components analysis, was as follows:
 - 'Motor sports' = car racing, Formula One, motorcycle, speedway, stock car, drag
 - 'Racquet' = tennis, squash, ice hockey, cricket
 - 'Indoor' aerobic = gym, aerobics, swimming, basketball
 - 'Social' or popular = snooker, boxing, horse racing, darts, wrestling
 - 'Outdoor' = athletics, skiing
 - 'Football' = soccer, rugby
 - 'Club' = golf.
- 2 The equivalent change for 'passive participation' in sport (watching on television or at live events) was a decline from two minutes to one minute per day on average.
- 3 The questions we asked were 'Do you ever play any sports or do any physical exercise?' and, if yes, 'What is your favourite sport or exercise to play or take part in nowadays?'.
- 4 Compare Bourdieu (1984: 216, Table 21) for similar results, though in response to a slightly different question.
- 5 A declining proportion of exercise is observed monotonically as one moves down the occupational class scale. The most regular exercisers are the members of the professional-executive class, of whom just over 50 per cent exercise weekly. Of those with degrees, 55 per cent claim to exercise at least weekly. The young are more likely to exercise. However, there is little difference between men and women, or between ethnic groups.
- 6 When subjected to a Principal Components Analysis to identify clustering, four components were identified. The first loaded fashion, designer wear and smartness. On the second lie convenient, inexpensive and easy to wear. The third dimension is positive about 'casual' but equally strongly negative about 'comfortable' clothes: clearly for many people these terms are mutually exclusive. The fourth component registered a preference for traditional styles.
- 7 Mechanisms likely to account for the relationship between educational experience and exercise include: that some educational institutions foster a taste for games, and for particular types of game which are locally accorded prestige; that some educational institutions give additional opportunities to learn to play games, and a range of games, as a function of facilities and curriculum design; and that longer exposure to sporting activity and facilities retains interest further through the life course.

10 Cultural formations of the middle classes

- 1 It is important to see Bourdieu's categories here as roles, rather than as fixed occupational groupings. In some cases, these roles do indeed become crystallised as occupations, to the extent that we might treat occupational groups as shorthand for the role itself, but we should not assume that this is always the case.

- 2 For NS-SEC classification, see Rose and Pevalin (2003). NS-SEC2 is higher professional occupations, NS-SEC3 is lower professional occupations.
- 3 Covering six domains, asking whether the respondent 'would make a point of' watching types of TV programme or films by a particular director, and measures of likes and dislikes of named musical works, named artists, book genres and music genres, a scale containing 40 different items was constructed. The lowest recorded score was zero; eight people liked none of the items offered. The highest score was 27. The lowest quintile liked six or less items. The highest quintile liked 14 or more items. People were thus generally rather hesitant about professing likings for cultural works or genres.
- 4 Seven of the eight respondents identified as highly culturally engaged were women, and all but one were white. All but one had a degree. They also tended towards professional occupations, including three who were engaged in teaching of some kind, a freelance worker in the heritage industry, two social workers and a young graduate researcher working in local government. The remaining case, a full-time mother, was the respondent without a degree. Their occupations were broadly linked to public service, within health and social care, education and heritage sectors. That seven of the eight were women might be interesting, but as we conducted household interviews with only three men with high cultural capital, it is likely to be fortuitous rather than significant. The regression analysis showed that women participate a little more, though men express more likes.
- 5 A variation on the *Survivor* format, *I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here*, is a prime-time ITV show in which a group of celebrities endure various messy indignities whilst camping in the Australian jungle.
- 6 Unprompted class identity is that given by respondents when they reply 'yes' to a prior question 'do you normally think of yourself as belonging to a social class?'. Prompted class identity is the class identity given by those respondents who reply 'no' to this prior question. For the purposes of Table 10.3, lower-middle and upper-middle class have been coded as middle class.

11 Culture and the working class

- 1 The work of the Centre at Birmingham, however, never generated comprehensive studies of the cultural orientations of the British working class. The earlier New Left account inspired by Gramsci, of a cultural hegemony that incorporated the working class, was replaced by an influential analysis of Thatcherism, which ran under the banner of 'New Times' (1988).
- 2 At the same time we should note that 'non-white' persons are disproportionately allocated to working-class positions (58 per cent) compared with a sample average of 47 per cent.
- 3 Note that Marshall *et al.* might have recorded an exaggerated effect in 1984 because their questionnaire was heavily focused on class (see Saunders, 1989) and it was fielded during the bitter miners' strike of 1984–1985.

12 Gender and cultural capital

- 1 One woman, Nameeta Raza, 1278, is located but we have only one qualitative interview for her household, as her husband was interviewed in her stead.
- 2 *Shirley Valentine* is an Oscar nominated 1989 film directed by Lewis Gilbert, about a housewife who has a transforming liberating experience while holidaying in Greece.
- 3 Imelda Marcos, former Philippine First Lady who in 1986, when her husband was ousted from power, was found to own 1060 pairs of shoes.

13 Nation, ethnicity and globalisation

- 1 DiMaggio and Ostrower rely on the 1982 and 1985 US Surveys of Participation in the Arts, and Bryson uses the 1993 US General Social Survey, while other studies are

based on city data, as in Trienekens' use of a 1999 leisure and cultural participation survey in Rotterdam. Bryson is the main exception to this to the extent that her analysis is based on original survey data, including named cultural items, but her survey was limited to a particular cultural sector in the Canadian context and ranges across only a limited number of cultural fields. The same is true of DiMaggio's and Ostrower's limitation to the performing arts and of Erickson's exclusive focus on musical genres, thus rehearsing the limitations of Peterson's work. While based on a more broad-ranging survey encompassing cultural activities such as dancing, acting and drawing, and participation in cultural institutions like museums and classical music concerts, the work of van Wel *et al.* is focused solely on young people in Utrecht and so is unable to illuminate generational differences.

- 2 The qualification 'usually' is important here since a good deal of the literature on globalisation is prone to hyperbole, and often confuses financial and cultural transactions within regional trading blocs for a more general processes of undifferentiated globalisation. Paul Hirst and Grahame Thompson (2000) sounded an early and, in our view, still valid warning against this aspect of the globalisation literature.
- 3 For a detailed exploration of CCSE material on housing and the dream home, see Silva and Wright (2009).
- 4 In this section, we use 'European' as shorthand for 'Continental European', or Europe excluding the UK.
- 5 We are cautious here, since the evidence of our focus groups is somewhat contradictory on this matter, with the members of the focus group comprising Pakistani managers and professionals going to some pains to either distance themselves from community-specific practices or to see their role in relation to these as mainly organisational.
- 6 This touches on another aspect of the relations between cultural capital and international migration patterns: that the educational assets of non-white migrants rarely have the same value as those of either white migrants or those of the 'native' population. It is also important to recognise that for many migrants with strong continuing connections to their countries of origin, it is their economic and social standing in those countries that provides the key horizon of calculation in relation to the accumulation and circulation of cultural capital assets.
- 7 The gender composition of the ethnic boost file is tilted in favour of men who outnumber women by 55 per cent to 45 per cent, reversing the main sample ratio of 54 per cent women to 46 per cent men.
- 8 Our findings in this regard are similar to those reported by Gina Netto (2008) in her study of arts participation on the part of minority ethnic groups in Scotland.

Methodological appendices

- 1 Focus group convenors were Stephanie Adams (Swansea), Chris Archer (Borders region of Scotland), Surinder Guru (Birmingham), Ruth Jackson (Belfast), Karen Wells (London) and David Wright (Nottingham).
- 2 Readers should note that the analysis reported here is more fully elaborated than that reported in Savage *et al.* (2005b) and Gayo-Cal *et al.* (2006), and that the current account is therefore more robust.
- 3 See Silva (2005a) for the detailed technical report.
- 4 Interviews were conducted by Stephanie Adams, Tony Bennett, Chris Archer, Ruth Jackson, Pippa Stevens, Mike Savage, Elizabeth Silva, Alan Warde and David Wright.

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Index

page references followed by t indicate a table

- Abbott, A. 44, 32
 Adkins, L. 17, 216, 230
 Adorno, T. 283
 age 2, 3, 10, 30, 43, 53, 80t, 81, 82, 93,
 130, 133, 172, 184t, 248t; cinema and
 television preferences and 142–6, 143t,
 146t; older people 127, 133, 164, 165,
 178, 183, 184, 199, 212, 220, 228, 231,
 237, 244, 254, 260, 262t;
 trans-generational factors 29, 31, 38,
 133, 143; youth 9, 53, 54, 76, 91, 93,
 115, 117, 125, 127, 133, 164, 178, 199,
 205, 208, 210–1, 212, 220, 250, 259,
 262t, 277 *see also* children
 Akass, K. 285
 Albrow, M. 236
 Alexander, J. 17, 18
 Allan, G. 66
 Alvarez, E.G. 77, 185
 Appadurai, A. 236, 238
 art *see* visual art
 Arts Council England, survey 77
 Augé, M. 236
 Australia 96, 123, 284
 avant-garde 12, 14, 30, 51, 128, 173, 243,
 253, 259, 263
 Bagguley, P. 178
 Bagnall, G. 78, 146, 191, 193, 237, 284
 Bain, A. 136
 Ball, S. 17
 Bargeman, B. 19, 185
 Barthes, R. 9
 Bauman, Z. 22
 Becker, H. 32
 Belfast 260, 280, 288 *see also* Northern
 Ireland
 Bellah, R., Madsen, R., Sullivan, W.
 et al. 255
 Bellavance, G. 19, 188
 Benjamin, W. 13
 Bennett, T. 16, 19, 21, 22, 27, 29, 90, 96,
 118, 190, 283, 284, 285, 286
 Benson, R. 13, 107, 285
 Benzécri, J.-P. school of geometric data
 analysis 32; modified rates, Eigen values
 and rates of variance 262t
 Bérubé, M. 21
 BIC statistic (Schwartz) 285
 Birmingham University, Centre for
 Contemporary Cultural Studies 20,
 196–7, 287
 Bjarkman, L. 134, 145
 Blasius, J. 263
 Blau, P. 17, 36
 Blokland, T. 177
 Bloor, M., Frankland, J., Thomas, M. and
 Robson, K.. 261
 body, culture of the 151–4, 161t, 164t,
 214–5; care and adornment of body 152,
 154, 155, 158, 159–160, 160–4, 168,
 169, 170, 226; concept of embodied
 cultural capital 153–5, 257; preferred
 styles of dress by gender 162t, 226, 228,
 240 *see also* eating; sport and exercise
 Boltanski, L. 15
 Born, G. 21, 133
 Boschetti, A. 95
 Bourdieu, P. 1–3, 9–23, 24, 25, 29, 31–2,
 34, 51–2, 71, 89, 95, 97, 114, 126, 130,
 132, 134, 153, 154–5, 156, 170, 171,
 177, 180, 182, 190, 195, 197–8, 214,
 215, 217, 234, 253, 254, 256, 257–8,
 259, 261, 263, 275, 283, 284, 285

- Bourdieu, P. on: decolonising Algerian society: 1958 9; 1979 234; embodied cultural capital 29, 160, 161–3, 169 (body 169, 214–5, 232; sport 156, 158); ethnicity 215, 234; gender 214–5, 217, 232; middle class 177, 175, 179, 180, 181, 182, 190, 252, 253; music 76, 77, 89, 92, 126; reading 95–6, 97, 100–1, 110 (newspapers 106); television and film 133, 133, 134, 143, 149, 285; visual art 9, 31–2, 114, 126, 130, 234 (photography 9, 114); working class 195, 197–8, 252
- Bryson, B. 19, 77, 81, 82, 235, 288
- Burrows, R. 32
- Butler, T. 17, 178
- Byrne, B. 237
- Caldwell, J. 145
- Calhoun, C. 17–18, 230
- Callewaert, S. 14, 283
- Callon, M. 15
- Canada 235; French Canadians 188
- Carrabine, E. 19
- Castells, M. 236
- Centre de Sociologie Européenne 14–15
- Chan, W. 85, 82, 113
- Charlesworth, S. 17, 177
- 'Chavs' 211
- children 29, 276, 277; help with homework 225, 226, 240; sport and 155 *see also* household relations; motherhood
- cinema 49, 50, 51, 52, 63, 64, 122, 132, 133, 134, 135, 142–50, 143t, 155, 173, 180t, 181, 190, 199, 207t, 222, 243, 245, 246, 261, 262t, 266t, 286; different class registers of cinema 135–42, 139t, 170 *see also* film
- civil society, participation in 195, 196, 202, 213
- class positions, structure of 2, 3, 4, 10, 25, 26–7, 43, 54–6, 66, 93, 170–4, 250, 251–3; gender, class and household type 218t; hostility 209–212, 256; political opinions by class 202, 203t, 206; regional scales and class 249t; taste preferences by class 200t, 201; three class model 55–6 *see also* exclusion, social; individual cultural fields (body; eating; film; music; reading; sport; television; visual art); leisure; middle class; relational organisation of the social; working class
- clothing 152, 154, 155, 162–3, 169, 286; ethnicity and 163; preferred styles of dress by gender 161t, 226, 228, 229
- Cohen, S. 77
- Collège de France* 14
- Coleman, J. 17
- Collins, J. 21, 94
- concentration ellipses 274–5
- Connell, R. 216
- 'conspicuous consumption' 12, 179
- Cook, R. 21
- Conservative Party, support for 202
- Couldry, N. 22, 285
- Crary, J. 135
- Crompton, R. 216
- Crossley, N. 2, 169
- Crow, G. 66
- cultural and media studies 20–2
- cultural capital 2, 3, 4, 10, 11–12, 17, 23, 51, 54, 58, 73–169, 193, 194, 213, 251–60, 275–6; definition 11–12; disaggregating 28–31; distinction between institutionalised, objectified and embodied cultural capital 153, 258; gender and 214–34; researching 24–39; subcultural capital 255–6, 259 *see also* individual cultural fields; leisure; nation, ethnicity and globalisation; national cultural capital; sociology, cultural
- cultural confidence 65, 67–8, 70, 71, 130, 131, 256
- cultural omnivores 18–19, 28, 33, 51, 66, 70, 75, 76–7, 80–2, 92, 177, 182–91, 184t, 235, 254–5, 257
- culture, differentiation between 'elite' and 'popular' 11, 18–19, 21, 23, 31, 43, 48, 50, 51, 56, 76, 80; 172, 187–91, 194, 243, 252, 253, 255; devaluation of status 126 *see also* individual cultural fields
- culture, legitimate 11, 30, 38, 56, 61, 75, 93, 95, 100, 102, 104, 107, 110, 111, 112, 126, 129, 134, 142, 143, 153, 172, 173, 177, 187, 188, 189–90, 194, 198, 202, 204, 205, 207t, 211, 212, 213, 252, 253, 254, 255, 257, 258
- Darbel, A. 31–2, 130
- DeLanda, M. 34
- Deleuze, G. 29, 34, 284
- Dennis, N. 195
- DeNora, T. 76
- Devine, F. 54
- De Nooy, W. 35
- DiMaggio, P. 17, 19, 77, 123, 235, 288

- DiMaggio, P. *et al.* 123
 disinterestedness 253–4, 257–8; of middle class 25, 28, 30, 32, 135, 182
 distinction 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 258, 259; middle class sense of 26, 177, 189
Distinction (Bourdieu) 1–3, 51, 71, 89, 97, 114, 130, 132, 134, 154–5, 170, 171, 177, 180, 182, 190, 195, 197–8, 214, 215, 217, 234, 261, 263, 285; aftermath of 9–23, 275; methodological appendix to 25, 31 *see also* Bourdieu, P.
 diversity 252, 253, 256; of middle class taste 19, 53, 177–8, 186, 188, 190
 Duncan, O.D. 17, 36
 Durkheim, E. 14
- Eastern Europe 195
 eating 164–70, 228, 240, 261, 262t; diets, special 168; diets, weight loss 164, 168; eating at home 166–8, 223, 229; eating out 43, 45, 47t, 48, 50, 53, 54, 56, 57, 64, 65, 155, 164–6, 169, 183, 188, 189, 199, 207t, 209, 224, 228, 241, 251, 264, 272t, 274t
 economic factors 2, 13, 16, 18, 20, 26, 29, 28, 30, 33, 34, 37, 38, 179, 182, 189, 195, 210, 212, 215, 251, 258, 263; cinema attendance 140; eating out 165, 209; France 198; income inequalities 177; male privilege and economic capital 216; music 93; sport 158, 169; visual art 113, 122, 126, 130
 education 23, 36, 37–8, 43, 52, 53, 66; alternative and complimentary medicine and 164; body modification activities and 161, 169; eating out and 166–7; father's 53; middle class identity and 178, 181, 183, 184t, 185, 186, 191, 193, 211, 253, 287; mothers and 214; music and 80t, 81, 82, 84, 88, 91, 92, 93, 172, 190; reading and 95, 104, 105, 106, 111; sociology of stratification and 16–17, 28–9, 34, 258; sport and 156, 158, 160, 168, 169, 286; television and 134, 135–6, 148; visual art and 122, 123t, 126, 127–8; working class identity and 195, 198–9, 206, 208
 Egerton, M. 216
 Emmison, M. 19, 21, 96, 205, 283, 284
 emotional capital 29–30, 98, 103, 105, 112, 223, 258
 'enclave cultures' 255
 England 262, 276 *see also* London; Midlands; Northern; South of English, J. F. 101
 'enterprise culture' 122
 Erickson, B.H. 19, 156, 235, 288
 escapism 69–70
 ethnicity 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 38–9, 54, 170, 183, 184t, 192–3, 199, 205–6, 209, 234, 235, 253, 276; Afro-Caribbean interviewees 65, 68, 89, 108, 109, 120, 150, 168, 192–3, 221, 240–1, 242–3, 260, 262t, 280, 281; clothes and 163; compared to gender 215; eating 166, 167–8, 169, 240, 241; ethnic boost sample (Afro-Caribbean, Indian, Pakistani) 1, 4, 37, 38, 124, 135, 144, 146, 208, 237, 245, 246, 247t, 248t, 249t, 250, 263, 281, 288; film and 238, 239, 240, 243, 244, 245, 246, 286; Indian interviewees 88, 89, 119, 120–1, 135, 144, 150, 163, 166, 167–8, 220–1, 229–31, 238–40, 242, 260, 262t; music and 76, 79, 80t, 81, 82, 83, 88–9, 92–3, 235, 239, 240, 241, 244, 245, 246, 280, 281; nation, globalisation and 234–50; organisations 235; reading and 108, 109, 237, 242, 244, 245, 246; Pakistani interviewees 63, 82, 83, 88, 118–9, 135, 144, 150, 166, 208, 220, 237–8, 241–2, 260, 262t, 281, 288; Pakistanis in Manchester 237; sport and 160, 241; television and 135, 237, 240, 241, 244, 245, 246; visual art and 115, 116, 119, 125–6, 127, 227, 244, 245
 Europe, art gallery and museum visiting 113
 Europe, culture-scapes of England, USA and 245–50, 247t, 248t, 249t
 Europe, reading 96, 244
 European cultural heritage 76, 92, 172, 234, 243, 244
 European films 143, 244
 exclusion, social 2, 60, 65–6; cultural disengagement and social isolation 61; cultural dispossession 198; cultural engagement and face to face social activity 62; detachment of working class 201–5, 222, 263–4; exclusion and marginalizing of women 216; exclusiveness of middle-class 177, 186; social disengagement and avoidance of formal cultural activities 63; visual art and sense of 119, 120, 121
 Fairclough, N. 2
 family *see* children; household interviews; household relations

- Featherstone, M. 178
- femininity 214, 216, 217, 225, 226, 228, 229, 230, 232–3
- field theory and relational organisation of the social 31–6
- film 4, 13, 22, 43, 45, 47t, 48, 50, 53, 60, 61, 64, 65, 68, 94, 113, 121, 132–51, 143t, 155, 180t, 187, 190, 200t, 201, 207t, 208, 209, 213, 234, 251, 261, 262t, 264, 268–9t, 274t, 287; ethnicity and 238, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 286; gender and film preferences 147–9, 147t, 220, 222, 229, 230, 232 *see also* cinema
- film genres: action/adventure/thriller 133, 139t, 143t, 147t, 223, 266t; alternative/art 139t, 140, 142, 143t, 147t, 148, 170, 243, 286; Bollywood 133, 139t, 143t, 147t, 209, 241, 242, 266t; cartoons 139t, 143t, 147t; comedy 133, 139t, 140, 142, 143t, 147t, 266t; costume/literary adaptation 132, 133, 139t, 140, 142, 143t, 143–4, 146, 147t, 148, 170, 207, 266t; crime 139t, 143t, 147t; documentary 139t, 140, 143t, 147t, 148, 149, 266t; fantasy 139t, 143t, 147t, 148, 228; film noir 139t, 140, 143t, 147t, 148, 170; horror 49, 56, 133, 134, 139t, 140, 142, 143t, 147t, 148, 149, 181, 223, 266t, 286; musicals 49, 133, 139t, 140, 142, 147t, 207, 266t; romance 49, 102, 133, 139t, 140, 143t, 147t, 149, 222, 266t; science fiction 133, 134, 139t, 140, 142, 143t, 147t, 148, 207, 266t, 286; war 49, 133, 139t, 140, 143t, 147t, 148, 149, 223, 228, 266t; westerns 26, 46, 53, 68, 132, 133, 139t, 140, 142, 143t, 147t, 207, 209, 222, 226, 266t
- films by title: *Billy Elliot* 221; *Bladerunner* 144; *Bridget Jones Diary* 187, 229; *Devdas* 242; *Dr. Zhivago* 227; *Fanny and Alexander* 146, 229; *The Firm* 102; *Gone with the Wind* 64, 231; *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* 94, 102; *The Magnificent Seven* 234; *The Matrix* 67, 144, 242; *Pride and Prejudice* 94, 102, 229; *Pulp Fiction* 230; *Rocco and His Brothers* 9; *Saving Private Ryan* 149; *Scarface* 65; *Shirley Valentine* 227, 228; *Singing in the Rain* 67, 234; *Star Trek* 143; *Sweet Sixteen* 67; *Twelve Monkeys* 67, 144; *Untamed* 231
- Fiske, J. 21
- Foucault, M. 10, 14, 20–1, 283
- Fougeyrollas-Schwebel, D. 15
- Fowler, B. 13, 14, 96
- France 1, 11, 15, 132, 146, 197, 198, 234–5, 251, 253, 254, 259; education 16; Lamont's study of middle class 18; migration to 38, 234; sociology 14–16, 263, 283
- Fridman, V. 19
- Frith, S. 134
- Frow, J. 19, 20, 21, 96, 123, 283, 284
- Fryer, R. 196
- gay and lesbian subcultures 22, 192, 216, 220, 221, 244, 260, 262t, 276, 281–2; class attitudes towards 202, 203t
- Gayo-Cal, M. 19, 29, 70, 171, 188, 254, 286, 288
- Gelder, K. 21, 22
- gender 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 43, 53, 184t, 185, 205–6, 207, 208, 210–1, 214–34, 250, 262t, 274, 275, 276, 277, 287, 288; body modification activities by gender 161t, 168; clothes and 154t, 226, 228, 229; contested gender identities 227–32; gendering of individuals and cultural fields 216, 220–8; household type 218t; music and 79, 80t, 81, 88, 220, 222, 223, 226, 228; occupational class 219t; participation in sport by gender 157t, 158, 159, 169, 220–1, 224, 229, 230–1; reading and 96, 103–06, 105t, 107, 109, 220, 221, 222, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 231; spectator sport and 156, 169, 228; televised sport and 155, 169, 222, 226; television and film 133, 138, 140, 147–9, 147t, 150, 221, 222, 223–4, 224, 225–6, 227, 228, 229, 231; visual art and 115, 120, 125, 127, 130 *see also* household relations; femininity; masculinity; motherhood
- geometric data analysis 32, 34, 283, 284
- Geraghty, C. 134, 145
- Germany 284
- Giddens, A. 10, 97
- Glass, D. 36
- Glevarac, H. 142, 146
- Goldsworthy, A. 122
- Goldthorpe, J.H. 2, 17, 28, 33, 44, 82, 85, 113, 178, 179, 193, 195, 217
- Goldthorpe, J.H., Lockwood, D., Bechofer, F. and Platt, J. 196
- Gouldner, A. 18, 178
- Gramsci, A. 21, 197

- Greenacre, M.J. 263
 Grenfell, M. 21, 112, 113, 122, 128
 Guattari, F. 284
- Haacke, H. 20
 Habich, M. 183
 habitus 58, 154, 158, 198, 251, 257, 284;
 dispersal of practices and 25–8, 35;
 specificity of class position and 3, 13–1,
 15, 18, 24; unity of 54
 Hage, G. 9–20, 30, 126, 236
 Halford, S. 216, 230
 Hall, S. 196, 197
 Halle, D. 18, 117
 Halsey, A.H. *et al.* 16
 Hardy, C. 21, 112, 113, 122, 128
 health 152, 153, 154, 158, 260; alternative
 and complimentary medical treatments
 by class 164t; healthy eating 167–8
 Heath, A.F. 190
 Henriques, F. 195
 Hennion, A. 78
 Hermes, J. 96
 Hesmondhalgh, D. 21
 Hirst, P. 288
 Hockney, David *Paper Pools* 68, 115,
 116, 117, 118–19, 120, 121, 128, 130,
 204, 238
 Hoggart, R. 20, 195, 196
 Holbrook, M. 183
 Holt, D. 77–8
 homology across fields 12–13, 23, 24, 26,
 43, 56, 179
 hostility, class and cultural 209–12, 257
 household interview participants 279–82
 household interviews 265–78
 household relations 4, 215–6, 217–30,
 219t; gendering of individuals and
 cultural fields 216, 219–7;
 ‘non-conventional’ households 217;
 types of 183, 184t, 217, 218t
 humanities, traditional conceptions of 10
 humour and social control 205
- ‘individuals, cloud of’ 44, 52, 55, 56, 187,
 224, 227, 264, 274–5, 279–81
 individuals, gendering of and cultural
 fields, 216, 220–8
 individuals in cultural maps 58–72;
 individuals in the space of lifestyles
 34–5, 59–67, 275 *see also* body; eating;
 film; leisure; music; reading; sport;
 television; visual art
 internet, use of 56, 62, 113, 129, 150
- Jacobs, J. 134, 145
 Jancovich, M. 142
 Jay, M. 283
 Jenkins, H. 22, 143
 Johnson, A. 261
 Johnson, R. 2
- Kabyle house 9, 15, 214
 Kane, D. 125
 Kant, I. 21, 28, 30, 59, 68, 71, 76, 130,
 135, 136, 253, 254, 257
 Kanter, R.M. 216
 Karen, D. 155
 Kern, R.M. 8, 33, 57, 70, 76–7, 82,
 183, 186
- Labour Party, support for 202, 206,
 212, 237
 Laclau, E. 197
 Lahire, B. 15, 19, 22, 26, 27, 28, 54, 57
 Lamont, M. 17, 18, 19, 66, 235
 language 235, 239, 240, 241, 242
 Lareau, A. 17
 Lash, S. 22, 178
 Latour, B. 15–16, 29, 35–6
 Lawler, S. 214
 Lazarsfeld, P. 31–2, 283
 Leach, R. 122
 leisure 10, 38, 61, 63, 64, 182, 189, 202–3,
 208, 213, 226, 261, 276; luxury and 179;
 museum attendance 50, 207t, 262t, 270t;
 ‘serious leisure’ 256; stately homes
 visits 50, 207t, 270–1t; theatre
 attendance 50, 207t, 221, 267t *see also*
 body; eating; cinema; film; music;
 reading; sport; television; visual art
 Le Roux, B. 55, 179, 263, 274t, 275, 283
 Levi-Strauss, C. 9
 Lewin, K. relational force-field theory 32
 Lewis, J. 21
 Li, Y. 202
 Liberal Democrats, support for 202
 lifestyles, space of 3, 13, 24, 25–8, 32, 34,
 44, 189, 207, 237, 254, 264, 274, 285;
 cultural map of UK in 2003 48–52, 251;
 individuals in the 34–5, 59–66, 275;
 social groups and 52–54, 55, 56
 Likert scale 284
 Lille 37; University of 34
 linguistics, structural, literary analysis
 35, 284
 LiPuma, A. 230
 literature 10, 21, 22, 47t, 239, 240 *see also*
 reading

- literature genres: autobiography 65, 97, 98, 99t, 100, 105t, 106, 111, 172, 244, 267t; biography 53, 61, 63, 64, 65, 68, 69, 70, 97, 98, 99t, 100, 105t, 106, 111, 172, 173, 187, 199, 211, 225, 226, 229, 231, 267t; fantasy 49, 50, 97, 98, 99t, 105, 110, 267t; horror 49, 97, 98, 99t, 102, 105, 110, 226, 242, 267t; modern literature 48, 50, 53, 54, 56, 69, 97, 98, 99t, 100, 101, 105t, 106, 111, 172, 173, 180t, 187, 199, 207, 211, 268t; religious books 51, 62, 97, 99t, 105t, 181, 230, 242, 268t; romances 60, 64, 97, 98, 99t, 102, 103, 104, 105t, 106, 110, 140, 172, 228, 229, 231, 267t; science fiction 49, 50, 61, 63, 68, 96, 97, 98, 99t, 102, 103, 105t, 110, 134, 230, 231, 242, 267t; self-help books 53, 62, 97, 98, 99t, 104, 105t, 112, 225, 227–8, 268t; who-dunnits 60, 61, 65, 97, 98, 99t, 103, 105t, 180t, 267t
- literature by title: *The Firm* 101t, 102, 245; *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* 94, 101t, 102, 245; *I know Why the Caged Bird Sings* 101t, 102, 245; *Madame Bovary* 101t, 102, 111, 246; *Pride and Prejudice* 94, 101t, 102, 103, 111, 229, 245, 246; *The Solace of Sin* 101t, 102, 245
- London 101, 107, 108, 109, 110, 118, 138, 185, 195, 228, 281, 288
- Longhurst, B.J. 19, 76, 77, 78, 146, 191, 193, 202, 237, 284
- Lucey, H. 224
- Lury, C. 216
- Luton 196
- McCabe, J. 285
- McCall, L. 215
- McKibbin, M. 198, 206
- McNay, L. 15, 17, 216, 219, 230
- McRae, S. 217
- Maffesoli, M. 255
- Majima, S. 177
- Manchester 237 *see also* Northern England
- Manchester School of Anthropology 283
- mapping tastes 41–9, 97–8, 110, 114, 122, 132–3, 134, 155, 156, 164–5, 170, 179, 181, 199–201, 202, 207–8, 213, 215, 217, 220–33, 237, 252, 256, 257; 263–75, 265–74t *see also* individuals; participation
- Marshall, G. 195
- Marshall, G. *et al.* 2, 287
- Martens, L. 19
- Martin, J.L. 32, 35
- Martin, P.J. 77
- Martin, R. 196
- masculinity 223, 224, 226, 228, 229, 230, 231–2, 233: appropriation of femininity for career advancement 216; power of 15, 23, 214, 215–6, 217, 219, 220
- media as a cultural preference *see* films; radio; television
- media studies 22, 134
- Merriman, N. 123
- Michael, M. 150
- middle class 28–9, 55–6, 57, 71, 77, 78, 79, 82, 84, 85, 91, 92, 93, 96, 101, 102, 104, 106, 107, 110, 116–8, 120, 122, 124–5, 126, 128, 129, 130, 134, 136–9, 137t, 139t, 141–3, 144, 146–7, 148, 151, 154–5, 157, 158, 160, 164t, 166–7, 178–82, 180t, 220, 235, 237, 259–60, 260, 262t, 279, 280, 281, 282, 285; advantages 14, 17, 23, 24, 178, 179, 190, 191, 252; Afro-Caribbean 192–3, 221, 242; comparison with working class 177, 178, 181–2, 180t, 185, 184t, 191, 192–3, 196, 200t, 202, 203t, 205, 207, 209–12, 251, 253–4, 256; cultural formation of 177–94; debate about conservative or radical nature of 178–9; disinterestedness 25, 28, 30, 32, 135, 182; diversity of tastes 19, 53, 177–8, 186–7, 188, 189; education and middle class identity 178, 181, 183, 184t, 185, 186, 191t, 193, 211, 253, 277; employment of women in middle class sectors 216, 217, 225, 226, 229–30, 231; Indian 96, 120–1, 166, 167–8, 230–1, 229–31, 262t, 270; instilling values in children 29; Lamont's study of cultural hierarchy 18; Pakistani 82, 166, 237–8, 263t, 271, 288; respondents social class by household type 218t; sense of distinction 26, 177, 189; tension between 'industrialists' and 'intellectuals' 179, 182 *see also* cultural omnivores; culture, legitimate; 'snob' culture
- Midlands 230, 240–1, 244, 280, 281, 282, 288
- Miles, A. 206
- Mill, J.S. 136
- modernist abstraction 12, 23, 30, 39 *see also* avant-garde
- Modood, T. 250

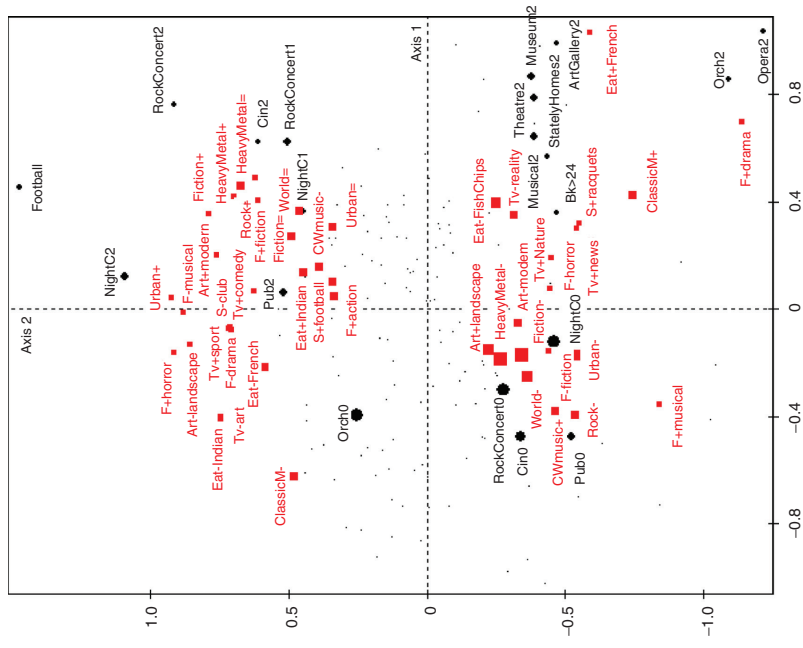
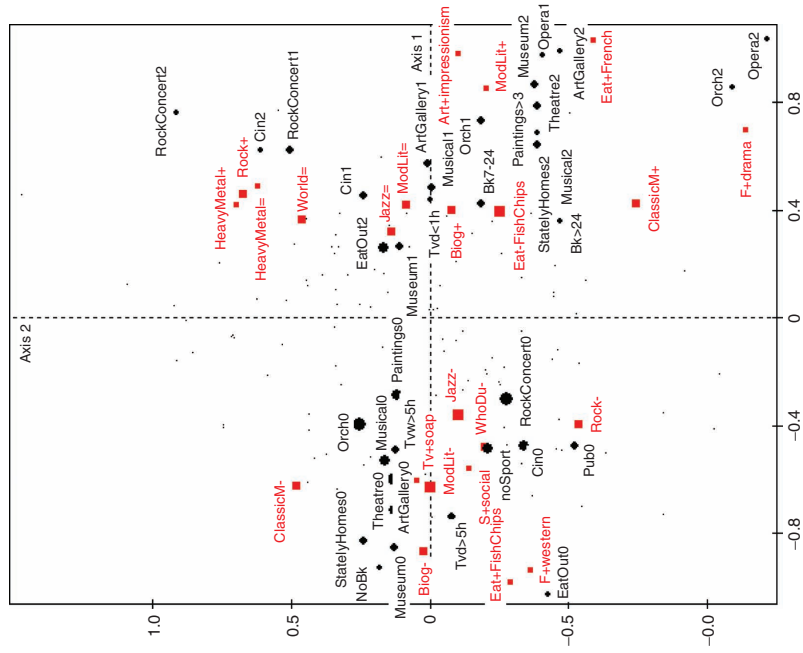
- Moorhouse, H.F. 196
- Morley, D. 22
- motherhood 214, 216, 225, 226, 228, 231, 237
- Mouffe, C. 197
- Mukhtar, T. 77
- multiculturalism 245, 253 *see also* ethnicity
- multiple correspondence analysis (MCA) 3, 25, 32, 33, 34, 39, 43, 44, 45–8, 47t, 75, 97–8, 111, 104, 122, 132–3, 134, 155, 156, 164–5, 155, 156, 179, 181, 200–2, 206–7, 213, 215, 217, 220–33, 237, 251, 267; analytic procedures 263–75, 265–74t; class structure in Britain 54–6; ‘cloud of individuals’ 52, 55, 58, 187, 224, 227, 264, 274–5, 279–81; ‘cloud of modalities’ 52, 264; cultural map of Britain 2003 48–52; individuals in cultural maps 58–71; social groups and space of lifestyles 52–54
- music 10, 13, 18–19, 21, 22, 30, 38, 43, 45, 46, 47t, 48, 49, 50, 52, 56, 60, 61, 64, 75–93, 97, 110, 114, 126, 132, 155, 165, 170, 171–2, 173, 180t, 181, 183, 185, 187, 188, 189, 190, 192, 194, 200t, 201, 202, 207t, 208, 209, 211, 224, 251, 254, 254, 261, 262t, 264, 268–70t; a contested cultural field 75–7; contours of taste 78–82, 78t, 79t, 80t; ethnicity and 76, 79, 80t, 81, 82, 83, 88–9, 92–3, 237, 239, 240, 241, 244, 245, 246; gender and 79, 80t, 81, 88, 220, 222, 223, 226, 228; intensities of taste 82–9; performance 89–91, 268–9t
- music genres: classical 21, 30, 34, 49, 50, 56, 61, 62, 65, 68, 75, 76, 77, 78t, 79, 80t, 81, 82, 91, 92, 93, 165, 170, 171, 172, 173, 180t, 181, 187, 189, 192, 194, 199, 200, 207, 211, 221, 222, 226, 228, 240, 241, 244, 252, 254, 255, 269t, 270t, 288; country and western 49, 50, 65, 75, 76, 78t, 79, 80t, 81, 82, 84, 85, 87, 92, 194, 199, 208, 226, 228, 241, 255, 270t; electronic 77, 78t, 79, 80t, 81, 173, 188, 254; heavy metal 49, 50, 54, 62, 65, 66, 68, 77, 78t, 79, 80t, 81, 87, 88, 92, 173, 208, 211, 222, 226, 254, 270t; hip hop 77, 78t, 110, 180t, 270t; modern jazz 50, 60, 62, 68, 75, 77, 78t, 79, 80t, 81, 82, 84, 85, 134, 187, 192, 199, 200, 208, 211, 226, 269t; opera 30, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 64, 65, 76, 77, 78t, 84, 86, 87, 89–90, 92, 132, 136, 180t, 181, 183, 189, 190, 240, 251, 253, 255, 268t, 270t; rock 48, 49, 51, 52, 53, 62, 65, 68, 75, 76, 77, 78t, 79, 80t, 90, 98, 172, 173, 187, 207t, 208, 211, 222, 226, 228, 254, 268t; R&B 77, 78t, 87, 88, 180t, 270t; urban 49, 50, 77, 78t, 79, 80t, 81, 180t, 187, 222, 270t; world 50, 65, 77, 78t, 79, 80t, 81, 181, 254, 269t
- musical works: *Chicago*, Sinatra 79t, 80, 200t, 246; *Einstein on Beach*, Glass 79t, 80, 246; *Four Seasons*, Vivaldi 79t, 80, 200t, 246; *Kind of Blue*, Miles Davis 79t, 80, 200t, 246; *Oops, I Did it Again*, Britney Spears 79t, 80, 200t, 246; *Stan*, Eminem 79t, 187, 200t, 246; *Symphony no. 5*, Mahler 79t, 200t, 246; *Wonderwall*, Oasis 79t, 80, 200t, 245
- Myrtlille, V. 19, 188
- nation, ethnicity and globalisation 234–50, 253; culture-scapes of England, USA and Europe 245–9, 247t, 248t, 249t; relationship of respondents to national culture and diverse cultures 238–45; ‘old England’, views on 238–9, 240, 241
- national cultural capital, definition 258–9
- National Centre for Social Research 37, 262
- National Endowment for the Arts (1997) 123
- New Labour, Third Way 2
- Netto, G. 288
- neo-liberalism 2, 16, 17, 20, 23, 177, 194
- ‘neo-tribe’ 255
- Netherlands 96, 185, 235
- Neveu, E. 13, 20, 107, 285
- Newby, H. 196
- New Left 196, 287
- ‘non-places’ 236
- Northern England 65, 102, 93–100, 184t, 195, 279, 280; Manchester 237
- Northern Ireland 60–2, 63–4, 82, 90, 102, 185, 184t, 228, 246, 262, 276, 279, 281; Belfast 260, 280, 288
- NS-SeC 55, 182, 198, 206, 287
- Nuffield Mobility Study (1970–72) 36
- occupation 36, 37–8, 52–3, 54, 66, 262t, 276; class identity by occupational group 191t, 219t, 287; employment of women in middle class sectors 216, 217, 225, 226, 229–30, 231; NS-SeC 55, 181,

- 198, 206, 287; *see also* middle class; working class *for cultural fields see* body; eating; film; leisure; music; reading; sport; television; visual art
- Offe, C. 195
- Ollivier, M. 19, 188
- Olsen, W. 19
- Osborne, T. 261
- Ostrower, F. 19, 235, 288
- Pahl, R. 195
- Painter, C. 113
- Pakulski, J. 195
- Papastergiadis, N. 236
- Parker, R. 22
- participation and cultural taste UK 43–64, 180t, 207t, 221–2, 223, 231, 252, 258, 264, 274t, 275, 276, 278; body, culture of the 153; eating 164–5, 169; factors influencing respondents' volume of participation 183, 184t, 186–7; music and 84, 168; 'passive participation' 286; reading and 96–8, 106; role of the 'fan' and 'supporter' 198; social advantage from participation 52; sport and 153, 155, 156, 157–8, 157t, 179, 160, 161, 168, 286; television and cinema and 133, 135, 140, 142, 146; visual arts and 114, 122, 127, 129, 130, 167 *see also* civil society, participation in; exclusion, social
- Passeron, J.-C. 15, 34
- Pêcheux, M. 27
- Penley, C.E. *et al.* 22, 143
- Peterson, R. 8, 18, 33, 57, 70, 76–7, 82, 182, 183, 186, 235, 254, 288
- Philips, D. 142
- photography 113, 114, 119, 203
- Pickles, A. 202
- Pollock, G. 22
- Poster, M. 22
- Postone, M. 230
- power and culture 20
- privatisation 196, 202
- protest movements and the middle class 178
- Putnam, R.D. 66
- radio 22, 132, 192, 203
- Radway, J. 22, 96, 97, 103
- Ragin, C. 32
- Rancière, J. 21, 38
- Ratte, M. 19, 188
- Ray, K. 202
- reading 13, 21, 26, 38, 43, 45, 46, 47t, 48, 49, 50, 52, 54, 56, 60, 61, 72, 73, 64, 67, 68, 69, 94–102, 132, 133, 172, 180t, 181, 237, 242, 244, 245, 246, 261, 262t, 264, 267–8t, 274t; book cultures 97–102, 99t, 102t, 105t, 170, 187, 207t, 211, 251; functions of 95–7; gender and 92, 103–6, 105t, 107, 109, 220, 221, 222, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230; newspapers and magazines 64, 94, 96, 106–10, 111, 170, 220, 221, 226, 243, 254 *see also* literature
- Reay, D. 17, 30, 214
- relational organisation of the social 3, 24, 31–6
- religion 60, 99t, 121, 208, 230–1, 235, 242
- Robbins, D. 9, 14, 34
- Roberts, K. 196
- Roberts, N. 136
- Robertson, R. 236
- Robson, G. 17
- Rose, J. 95, 284
- Rose, N. 261
- Rouanet, H. 55, 179, 263, 274t, 275, 283
- Runciman, W.G. 212
- Russia, post Soviet 96
- Russian Formalists 284
- Sanderson, K. 216
- Saunders, P. 287
- Savage, M. 29, 32, 54, 55, 78, 83, 84, 146, 171, 177, 178, 179, 191, 193, 198, 202, 206, 208, 210, 216, 230, 237, 252, 284, 286, 288
- Schnapper, D. 31–2, 130
- Sconce, J. 22, 134, 143
- Scotland 65, 66–8, 103, 107, 184, 184t, 228, 246, 247t, 262, 276, 279, 280, 288
- Selwood, S. (2002) 123
- Silva, E.B. 15, 17, 29, 30, 58, 113, 123, 124, 127, 129, 214, 215, 217, 238, 261, 277, 285, 286, 288
- Simkus, A. 18, 182
- Sintas, J.L. 77, 185
- Skeggs, B. 17, 151, 177, 193, 210–1, 214, 215, 216, 252
- Slaughter, C. 195
- 'slumming it' 26
- Smart, C. 217
- Smith, G.M. 22, 145
- 'snob' culture 12, 30, 39, 172, 182, 183, 211; diversity in accounts of taste and 66–71, 186, 189, 194

- social capital 38, 51, 66, 92, 99, 126, 156, 169, 190, 213, 215, 253, 256, 263; female 216
- social mobility 195, 199, 236
- Social Science Citation Index 10
- sociology, cultural 250, 257; French 14–16, 263, 283; stratification and education 16–17, 28–9, 34, 258; USA 17–20, 32, 33, 237, 236, 274
- South of England 63–4, 100, 185, 184t, 196, 280
- Spain 185
- sport and exercise 4, 26, 43, 45, 47t, 48, 53, 56, 60–1, 62–3, 65, 66, 144, 154, 155–60, 168, 170, 180t, 181, 186, 200t, 207t, 208, 209, 213, 251, 261, 262t, 264, 265t, 273t, 274t, 286; connotations of word 'sport' 155–6; ethnicity and 160, 243; exercise 286; function of sport 155–6; gender and 157t, 220–1, 222, 223, 225, 226, 228, 229, 230–1; spectator sport and 'bridging' social capital 156
- sports participation: badminton 49, 157t, 159, 229; bowls 157t; cycling 157t, 160; dancing 38, 88, 90, 157t, 160, 205, 221, 259, 288; golf 64, 68, 144, 154, 155, 156, 157t, 160, 168, 170, 181, 226, 241, 273t, 286; jogging/running 157t; keep fit/gym/aerobics 65, 153, 156, 157t, 158, 159, 160, 208, 273t, 286; soccer/five-a-side 34, 61, 63, 68, 136, 144, 155, 156, 157t, 160, 170, 186, 200t, 208, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 233, 241, 273t, 286; swimming 61, 116, 117, 118, 144, 156, 157t, 159, 160, 208, 221, 229, 273t, 286; tennis 49, 144, 154, 156, 157t, 170, 241, 273t, 286; walking 157t, 159, 160, 209, 228, 244; yoga 121, 153, 157t, 160, 231
- Stebbins, R. 255
- Steinberg, L. 2
- Street, J. 101
- survey methodology 37–40, 77, 235–6, 237–8; analytic procedures 263–75, 265–74t; elite interviews 278, 282; focus groups 260–2, 262t; household interview participants 279–82; household interviews 275–78; Nud*ist-Nvivo software 261, 277; ordinary least squares 275; questionnaire design 253; survey and its analysis 252–3
- Swansea 260 *see also* Wales
- Szszyszynski, B. 236
- Tampubolon, G. 171, 202, 288
- taste 1, 11, 25–8, 34–5; bad taste 205, 211, 256, 257; class hostility and 209–12, 256; 'inward' and 'outward' dispositions and 215, 221–3, 225, 226, 227, 229, 230–1, 253; taste over participation in sport 156; taste preferences by class 200t, 201; *see also* culture; ethnicity; gender; individual cultural fields; leisure; middle class; multiple correspondence analysis; participation; 'snob' culture; working class
- Taylor, B. 123, 128
- 'technical capital' 29, 258
- television 4, 13, 38, 43, 45, 47t, 48, 49, 50, 53, 56, 60, 61, 64, 66, 68, 69, 94, 102, 113, 121, 129, 132–51, 137t, 155, 167, 170–1, 181–2, 180t, 183, 186, 187, 188, 190, 192, 194, 199, 200t, 201, 203, 207t, 208–9, 210, 213, 229, 251, 255, 261, 262t, 264, 265–6t, 274t, 285, 287; cable and satellite 149–50; couch potato 150, 173; different class registers of television and cinema 135–42; ethnicity and 135, 239, 240, 241, 244, 245, 246; gender and preferences 133, 138, 136, 147–9, 147t, 150, 221, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 231; genre preferences and age 142, 144–6, 146t
- television genres: arts programmes 133, 134, 136, 137t, 140, 142, 147, 181, 204, 265t; comedy/sitcoms 49, 133, 137t, 142, 145, 146t, 147, 226, 265t; cookery/gardening/DIY 50, 133, 137t, 142, 147, 223; documentaries 70, 137t, 139, 140, 147, 148, 200t, 265t; drama 49, 133, 137t, 142, 144–5, 146t, 200t, 227, 237, 265t; news and current affairs 49, 65, 67, 68, 133, 134, 136, 137t, 139, 140, 142, 147, 148, 180t, 181, 200t, 222, 229; police/detective 51, 64, 132, 137t, 142, 147, 227, 228, 265t; quiz/game shows 50, 67, 98, 132, 137t, 142, 265t; reality 66, 133, 137t, 138–9, 142, 144, 146t, 147, 151, 167, 187, 188, 190, 229, 241, 255, 265t; soaps 53, 64, 67, 69, 133–4, 137t, 138, 142, 144, 145, 146t, 147, 148, 149, 180t, 181, 187, 188, 200t, 207, 222, 223, 224, 228, 229, 230, 231, 233, 237, 251, 255, 265t, 266t; sport 53, 56, 61, 68, 69, 136, 137t, 147, 156, 169, 180t,

- 181, 200t, 222, 241, 251, 265t; variety
133, 137t, 142 *see also* film genres
television programmes: *Absolutely
Fabulous* 145, 229, 245; *Bad Girls* 144,
245; *Big Brother* 66, 144, 188; *The Bill*
64, 144, 245, 246; *Buffy the Vampire
Slayer* 245; *Coronation Street* 64, 69,
144, 192, 200t, 208, 223, 224, 245, 246;
CSI 64; *EastEnders* 65, 69, 144, 192,
200t, 225, 229, 245; *Election Night* 200t,
245; *Footballers Wives* 221; *Friends*
145, 200t, 245; *The Grand National*
200t, 245; *Home and Away* 144;
Horizon 136; *I'm a Celebrity Get Me
Out of Here* 188; *Last Night of the
Proms* 61; *Mastermind* 68; *Match of the
Day* 225; *Midsomer Murders* 144, 200t,
245, 246; *Panorama* 200t, 245; *Pride
and Prejudice* 94, 102; *The Queens
Christmas Broadcast* 200t, 245; *Rolf on
Art* 116; *The Royale Family* 192; *Sex in
the City* 65, 145, 200t, 225, 245;
Shameless 65, 221, 225; *The Simpsons*
229, 245; *Six Feet Under* 145, 245; *The
Sopranos* 145; *South Park* 145, 187,
245; *Spooks* 145, 245; *A Touch of Frost*
64, 144, 200t, 245; *Twin Peaks* 145; *Two
Pints of Lager and a Packet of Crisps*
245; *University Challenge* 68, 245;
The West Wing 145, 245; *The
X-Files* 145
Thatcherism 2, 287
Thebaud, F. 15
Thévenot, L. 15
Thompson, E.P. 196
Thompson, G. 288
Thornton, S. 22, 30, 92, 259
Tomlinson, M. 202
'total volume of capital' 251
Touraine, A. 15
trade unions 195, 196, 202, 203t, 212
trans-national characteristics of culture and
society 2, 20, 23, 234–8; relationship of
respondents to national culture and
diverse cultures 238–45
Trat, J. 15
Trienekens, S. 30, 235
Tulloch, J. 22, 143
Turner, B. 195
Turner, J.M.W. 62, 115, 116, 125, 126,
129, 200t, 245; *Fighting Temeraire* 68,
115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 124,
125, 128, 130, 204, 238
UK *see* England; London; Midlands;
Northern England; Northern Ireland;
Scotland; South of England;
Wales
Upright, C. 113, 125
Urry, J. 178, 236
USA 15, 36, 66, 122, 123, 146, 186, 190,
234, 238, 243, 244, 253, 255, 285;
cultural sociology 17–20, 32, 33, 235,
236, 274; culture-scapes of England,
USA and Europe 245–9, 247t, 248t,
249t, 250; education 17, 134; General
Social Survey 33, 288; reading 96, 244;
Surveys of Participation in the Arts 288
see also Halle, D.; Peterson, R
Uzel, J.-P. 21
Van Eijck, K. 19, 185
Van Rees, K. 96
van Wel, F. *et al.* 235, 288
Verboord, M. 96
Vermunt, J. 96
Vester, M. 284
Vincent, D. 95
visual art 10, 13, 21, 22, 27–8, 31–2, 38,
43, 45, 46, 47t, 48, 49, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56,
60, 61, 64, 65, 68, 97, 113–31, 132, 155,
165, 170, 171, 172, 173, 180t, 181, 183,
187, 189, 190, 193, 200t, 201, 204, 207t,
210, 234, 236, 251, 254, 261, 264, 274t;
appreciating visual art 126–30, 127t,
128t, 200t; art gallery attendance 50,
128t, 207t, 261, 262t, 271t; consuming
visual art 123–6, 123t; contrasting
paintings 115–22, 271t; ethnicity and
115, 116, 119, 125–6, 127, 238, 245,
246; gender and 115, 120, 125, 127,
130; form and function 11, 131; Halle's
study of US domestic art collections 18,
113; participation in arts organisations
122; photography 113, 114, 119, 202;
shift in class boundaries 122
visual art genres: Impressionism 27, 50,
54, 56, 115, 116, 126, 127t, 128t, 129,
165, 172, 207, 222, 271t; landscape 18,
27, 28, 49, 50, 54, 64, 115, 119, 126,
127t, 128t, 129, 149, 181, 222, 271t;
modern art 49, 50, 65, 98, 114, 116, 120,
121, 124, 127t, 128t, 172, 181, 126, 129,
132, 190, 222, 238, 251, 271t;
performance art 60, 126, 127t, 128t, 129,
271t; portraits 49, 119, 126, 127t, 128t,
129, 271t; Renaissance 50, 126, 127t,

- 128t, 129, 170, 172, 181, 271t; still life
126, 127t, 128t, 129, 271t
voting behaviour 195, 202, 206, 212
- Wajcman, J. 216
- Wales 82, 83–4, 100, 102, 104, 107, 109,
165, 183, 184t, 211, 220, 246, 247t, 263,
276, 279, 280, 281; Swansea 260
- Walkerdine, V. 224
- Warde, A. 19, 29, 54, 55, 90, 118, 171,
177, 179, 188, 190, 202, 254, 286, 288
- Washington, R. 155
- Waters, M. 195
- Weininger, E. 283
- Weiss, J. 183
- Werbner, P. 237
- Wilkinson, R. 152
- Wilkinson, S. 261
- Williams, R. 20, 196
- Willmott, P. 195
- Wilson, P. 22, 145
- Witz, A. 216, 230
- Woollacott, J. 22, 286
- Wood, H. 151
- Woodward, I. 205
- working class 27–8, 55, 57, 70, 77, 90, 92,
102–3, 108, 109, 121, 131, 132, 134,
135, 137t, 139t, 148, 149, 151, 154, 156,
158, 161, 163, 164t, 166, 195–213, 218t,
231, 235, 244, 247, 261, 263t, 281, 287;
Afro-Caribbean 120, 122, 128, 260,
262t, 280; analysis of contemporary
working class 198–201; choice of the
necessary 25, 28, 30, 135, 140, 131, 143,
197; comparison with middle class 177,
178, 180–1, 180t, 185, 184t, 191, 192–3,
196, 200t, 202, 203t, 205, 207, 209–12,
252, 254–5, 257; cultural dispossession
198; culture, erosion of 4, 195;
detachment 201–5, 212, 252–3;
divisions within 205–9; education and
working class identity 195, 198–9, 206,
208; Indian 96, 97, 119, 238–40, 263,
263t, 281, 282; NS-SeC 55, 181, 198,
206, 287; Pakistani 82, 83, 88, 118–9,
208, 220, 242, 261, 263t, 281;
researching working class culture
196–8; solidarity 195, 196, 197, 205;
vocational skills 29, 198; Wales 92,
83–4, 107; women 17, 69, 107, 196,
197, 208, 210–11, 214, 220, 211,
228, 238–9
- Wouters, C. 169
- Wright, D. 19, 29, 188, 238, 254, 261,
277, 286
- Wright, E.O. 2
- Wu, C. 122
- Young, M. 195
- Zavisca, J. 96
- Zolberg, V. 114, 123



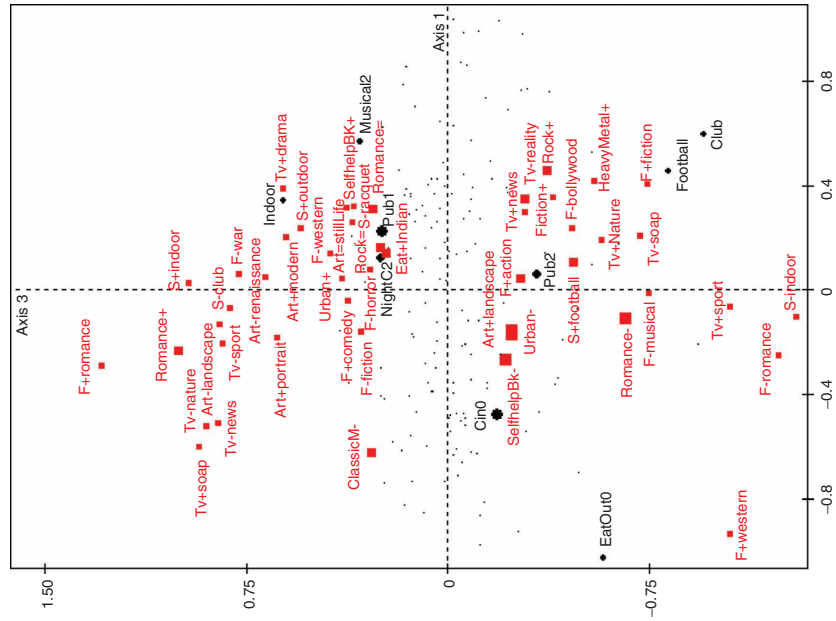


Figure 3.3 Multiple correspondence analysis: axes 1 and 3, indicating variables contributing to axis 3.

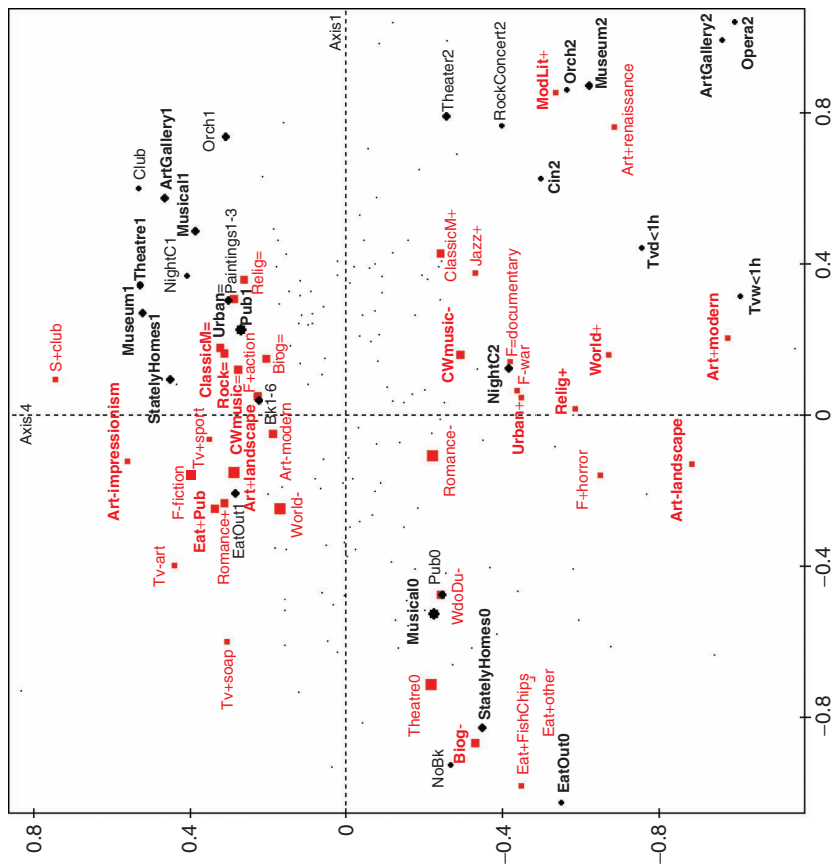


Figure 3.4 Multiple correspondence analysis: axes 1 and 4, indicating variables contributing to axis 4.

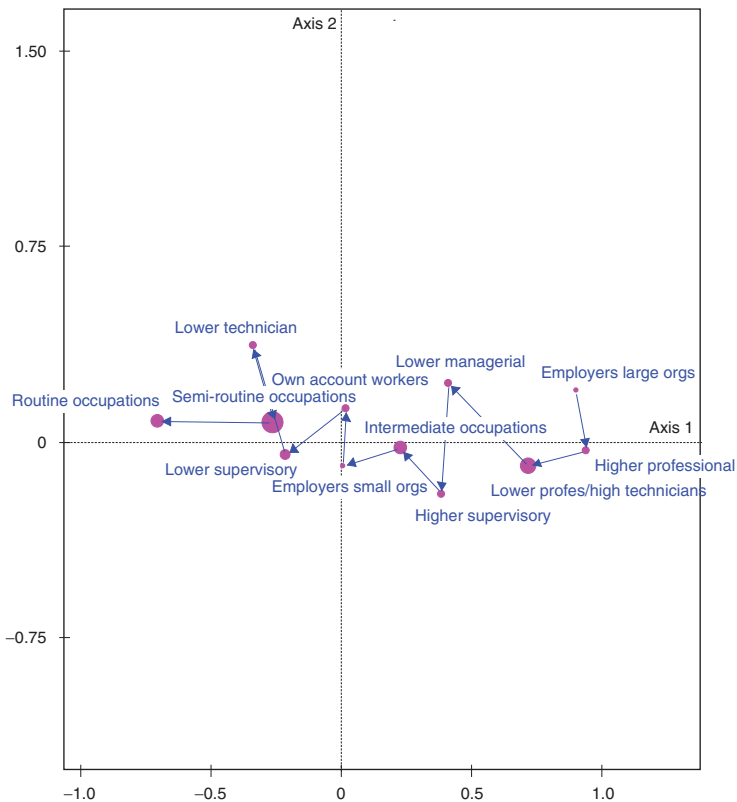


Figure 3.5 Multiple correspondence analysis: 12 occupational classes, axes 1–2.

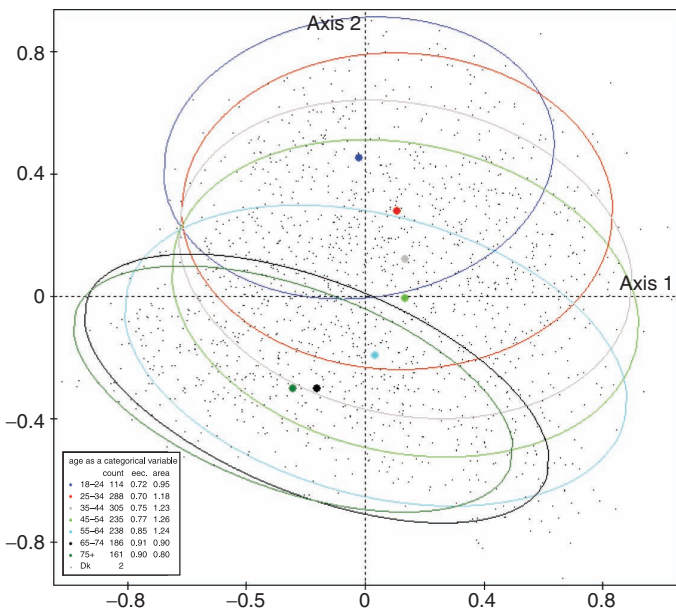


Figure 3.6 Deviation and concentration ellipses for age groups in axes 1–2.

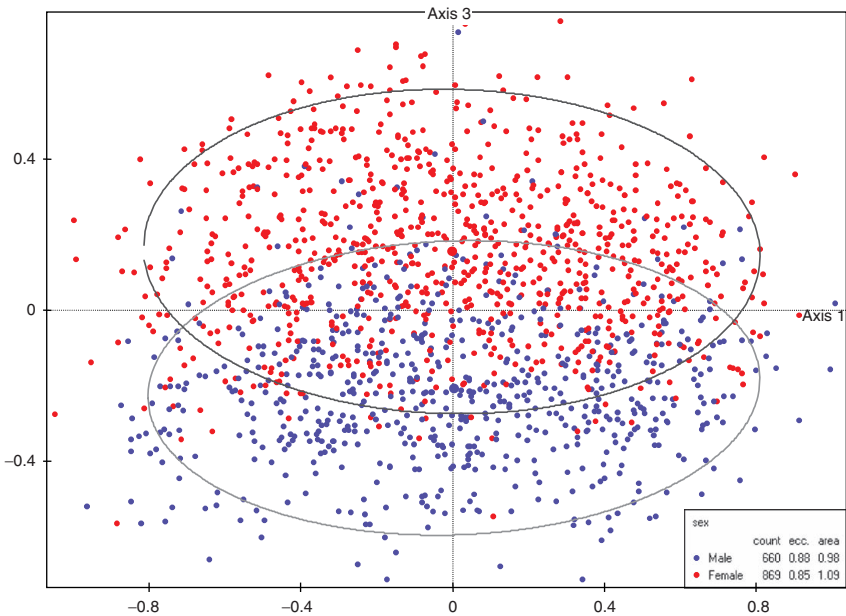


Figure 3.7 Dispersion of women and men, axes 1 and 3.

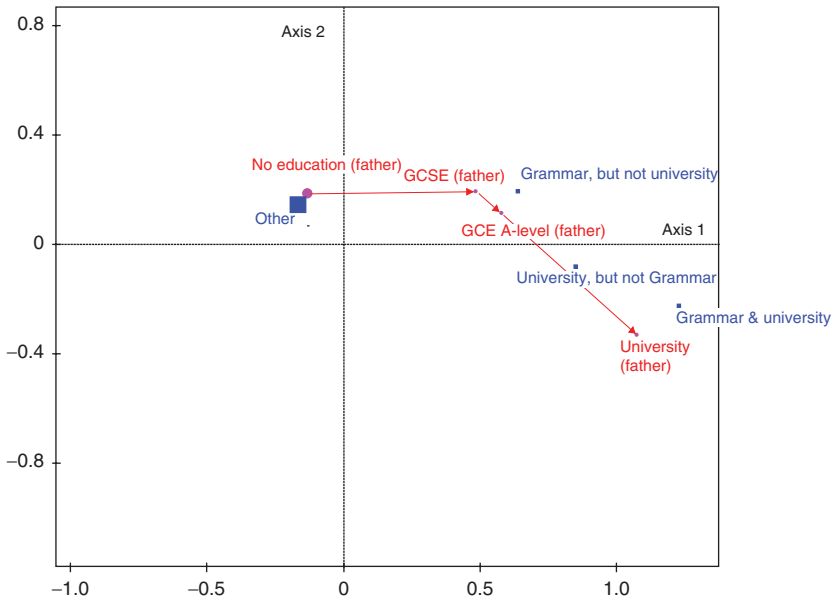


Figure 3.8 Father's highest qualification and respondent's educational experience, axes 1–2.

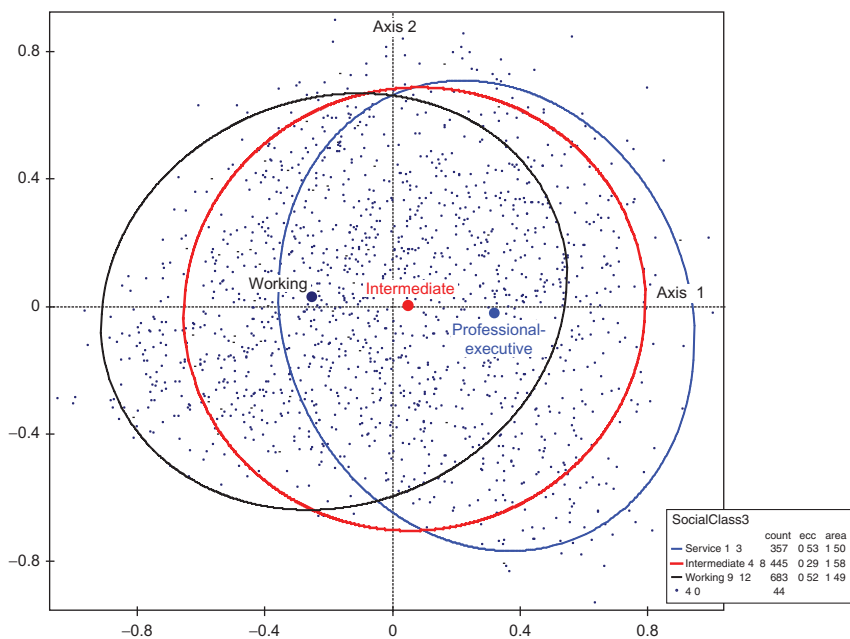


Figure 3.9 Distribution of three social classes, axes 1 and 2.

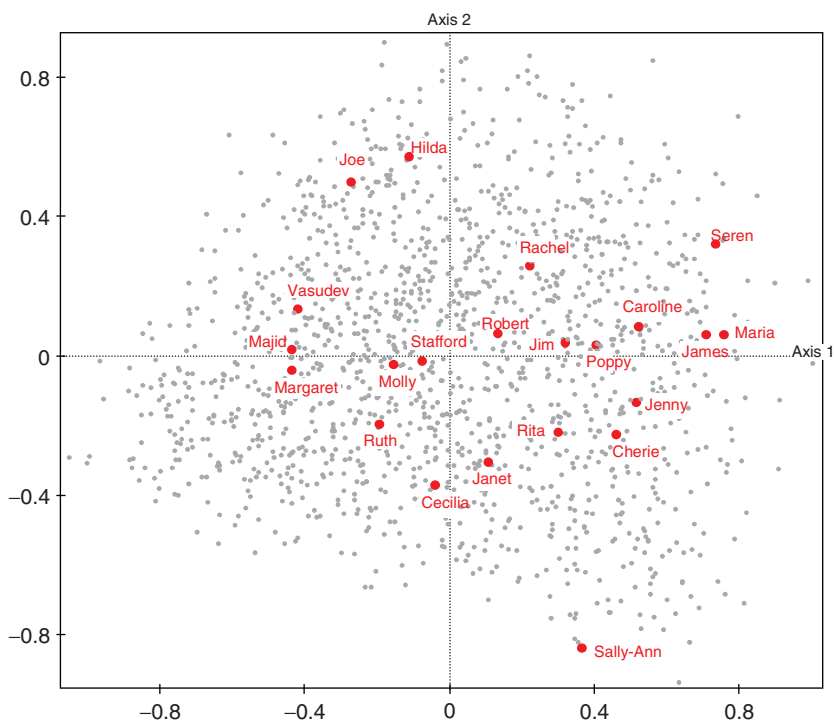


Figure 4.1 Position of interviewees (main sample) in space of lifestyle, axes 1 and 2.



Figure 7.1 *The “Fighting Temeraire” Tugged to her Last Berth to be Broken Up*, before 1839 by Turner, Joseph Mallord William (1775–1851) National Gallery, London, UK/ The Bridgeman Art Library Nationality.

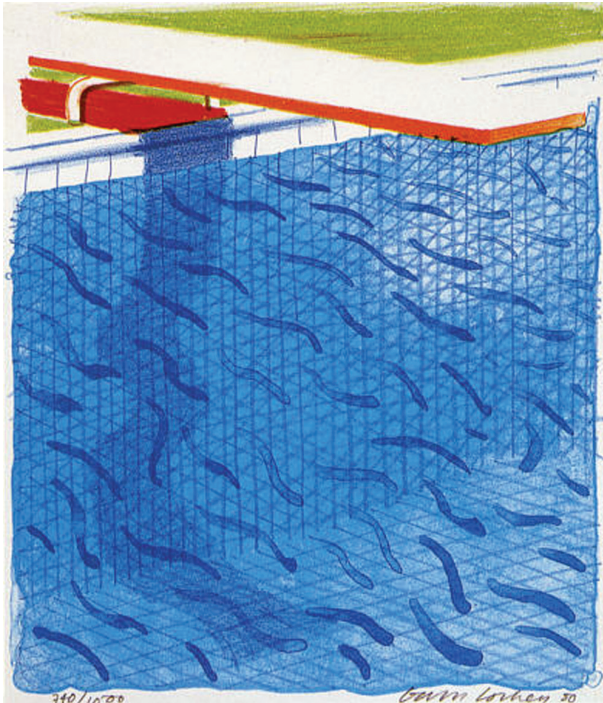


Figure 7.2 David Hockney, *Paper Pools* (1980).

David Hockney, “Pool made with paper and blue ink in *Paper Pools Deluxe book*” 1980, Lithograph, Edition: 1,000, 10 1/2 × 9", ©David Hockney/Tyler Graphics Ltd.

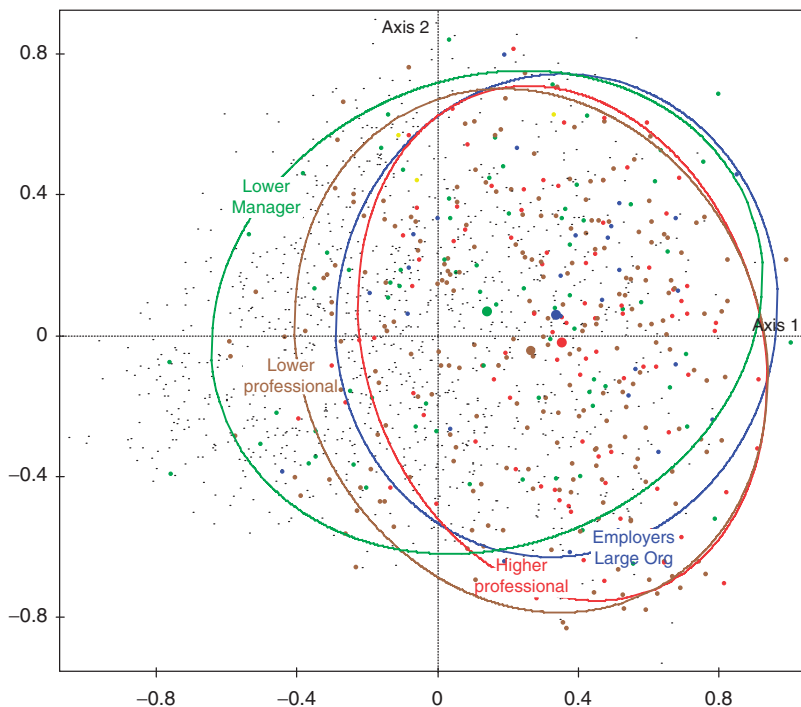


Figure 10.1 Middle classes in the cloud of individuals (four occupational classes).

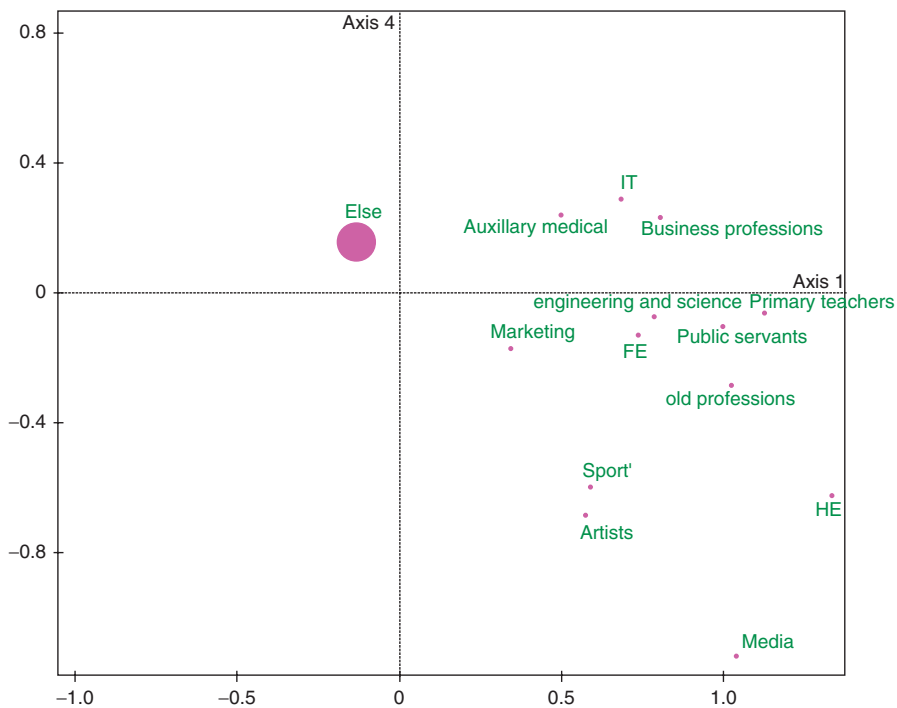


Figure 10.2 Distribution of professional occupations (mean points) in axes 1–4.

Note: For distribution of cultural modalities in axes 1–4, see Figure 3.4.

HE = Higher Education; FE = Further Education; IT = Information Technology.

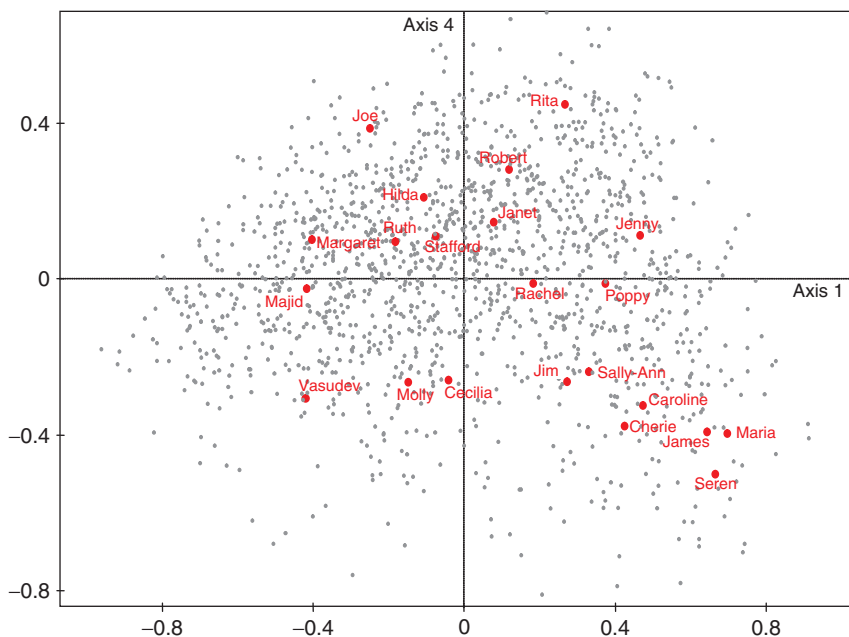


Figure 10.3 Position of interviews (main sample) in the space of lifestyles, axes 1 and 4.

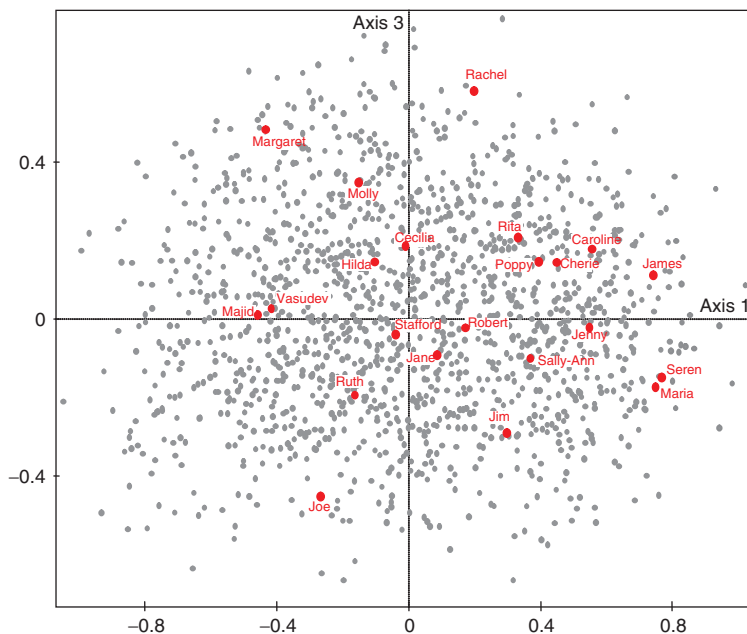


Figure 12.1 Interviewees (main sample), location in cloud of individuals, axes 1 and 3.